

# THE DIAL

A SEMI-MONTHLY JOURNAL OF

Literary Criticism, Discussion, and Information.

EDITED BY { Volume XVIII.  
FRANCIS F. BROWNE. { No. 207.

CHICAGO, FEB. 1, 1895.

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A Semi-Monthly Journal of Literary Criticism, Discussion, and Information.

No. 207. FEBRUARY 1, 1895. Vol. XVIII.

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## THE USE AND ABUSE OF DIALECT.

There are indications—not very marked as yet, but still indications—that the day of the dialect versifier and story-teller is waning. The literary epidemic for which he is responsible has raged with unabated virulence in this country for the past ten years or more. It has had almost complete possession of the *bric-a-brac* popular magazine. Its contagion has even extended to those periodicals which we too fondly fancied to stand for the dignities, as opposed to the freaks, of literature. At the other extreme, it has been disseminated and vulgarized by the newspaper and the popular reciter. A few of the men and women whom we count as real forces in American letters have been numbered among its victims. But all epidemics exhaust themselves in time, and we are encouraged to believe that this one is nearly spent. A tabulation of the contents of our popular magazines would now, we think, show a smaller proportion of pages unreadable for their bad spelling than would have been disclosed by a similar investigation made two years ago. The journalist, having for a time done his best to spread the fashion of dialect, is now aiming at it the shafts of his dull yet not ineffective satire. Many a literary worker is beginning to suspect that to misspell as many words as possible is not exactly the noblest of ambitions. Best of all, the whole fabric of realism—that is, of the crude photographic realism so noisily trumpeted by its defenders—is crumbling away, to make room in due time, we trust, for the true realism of the masters; and with this fabric there falls whatever theoretical defence of the dialect poem or novel may heretofore have seemed plausible.

We by no means anticipate the complete disappearance of the dialect element from our imaginative literature, nor would such a reaction be desirable. But we do expect the time to come when dialect shall occupy its proper place in composition, and be treated as a means rather than as an end. There is an important distinction between the story written for the sake of dialect and the use of dialect for the sake of the story; the latter practice is as excusable or even praiseworthy as the former is repre-



hensible. The question is one between a writer and his own conscience. Let the story-teller ask himself this question: Is it my purpose to produce a faithful yet idealized transcript of life, with its joys and its sorrows, with its tender human relationships and its grim struggle for the mastery of adverse conditions, the use of dialect being one of the elements necessary to the representation of essential truth; or am I merely taking advantage of a current fashion that tends to degrade the literary art, and, making of a grotesque orthography the *raison d'être* of my work, adding just enough of description and fancy and pathos to give my work the verisimilitude needed for it to pass muster at all? Most writers have sufficient conscience to answer this question truthfully, if squarely put; if they shirk the answer for themselves, they may be sure that the public, sooner or later, will find it for them. And the ultimate verdict of the only public worth writing for will never be favorable to the workman who fails to recognize the imperative obligation of this higher sort of conscientiousness.

When used with discrimination and artistic restraint, dialect is, of course, an admissible element in both poetry and fiction. English literature would be far the poorer without the treasures of Scotch dialect preserved in the poems of Burns and the novels of the author of "Waverley." Likewise, we could ill spare the work of the Provençal poets from the literature of France, of Goldoni's Venetian comedies from that of Italy, or of Reuter's Plattdeutsch tales from that of Germany. In all these cases, the work simply could not have been done at all without the employment of dialect; yet no one would venture to assert that the exploitation of a dialect was the prime motive that led to the composition of "Tam O'Shanter" or "The Antiquary," or "Miréio" or "Il Carnevale di Venezia" or "Ut Mine Stromtid." These are all instances of a richly endowed artistic nature finding expression in the medium most natural for his purpose. Even in our own country, a similar plea may be made for the language of Hosea Biglow, or of Mr. Cable's creoles, or of Miss Murfree's Tennessee mountaineers. But the swarm of commonplace and uninspired scribblers of dialect that have descended upon our periodical press during the past decade need not hope to find a safe refuge in the shadow of such really significant names as have been cited; their pretensions are too utterly without warrant and their productions too entirely without justification. Not

Lowell, but "Josh Billings," is their model and Great Example.

No discussion of the abuse of dialect that should omit the educational view would be adequate. The corrupting influence that may hardly be escaped by adult readers is tenfold more serious in its effect upon the growing mind. The prevalence of dialect in the papers and magazines that provide young people with most of their reading puts a new and formidable difficulty in the way of teachers and parents. Even the books put into our schools as models for the guidance of the young—the school "readers" themselves—often contain examples of perverted diction that cannot fail to exert an evil influence upon the impressionable years of childhood. Upon this aspect of our subject, we cannot do better than quote some pointed observations from a paper by Professor Willis Boughton, of Ohio University. Mr. Boughton says:

"For the past decade some of our most popular periodicals have been furnishing their readers with a weekly or monthly diet of dialect stories. A handful of editors have declared that the people want such literature, and it is produced. Instead of romances in cultivated language, we are introduced to most ordinary characters who use most ordinary folk lore. The Christmas story, Mr. Howells asserts, is written in the 'Yankee dialect and its Western modifications.' Even our verse is corrupted. Notice a stanza reproduced from a leading magazine:

'I'm been a visitin' 'bout a week  
To my little cousin's at Nameless Creek,  
An' I'm got the hives an' a new straw hat  
An' I'm come back home where my bean lives at.'

What literature! If the magazine, one of the greatest educational factors in our country, will tolerate such language; if you and I read it, and smile at it, and quote it, the Cincinnati teacher may be pardoned for the use of language that shocked Dr. Rice. To preserve the speech of a vanishing people, dialect literature may be justified; but to propagate such language is vicious. At school, the teacher may dwell at length upon the linguistic beauties of the 'Village Blacksmith'; but on Friday afternoon some urchin declaims:

'The Gobble-uns' 'ill git you  
Ef you don't watch out.'

and soon all the children in the district are repeating his words. Why the offspring of even polite society are prone to use bad English need be no longer a matter of wonder."

"To propagate such language is vicious." The words are none too strong, and we thank Mr. Boughton for them, hoping that the protest he raises will be echoed by educators everywhere.

These are some of the abuses of dialect; what, then, are its uses? To what fruitful end may we divert the effort now worse than wasted by the dialect-mongers of our periodical literature? By substituting a scientific for an artistic purpose, by making a serious study of



dialect instead of playing with it. The facts of dialect speech, as distinguished from the inventions of the newspaper humorist, are of great importance to the history of language. No more important linguistic work remains to be done in this country than that of recording the thousands of local variations of our speech from what may be called standard English. To fix these colloquialisms in time and place, to trace them to their origins, to construct speech-maps embodying the salient facts of popular usage wherever it has distinctive features—these are scientific aims of the worthiest. Work of this sort is being energetically carried on by a constantly-increasing number of observers in this country; but the ranks still call for additions, and new-comers will be heartily welcomed. As a coördinating agency for such scattered contributions to knowledge, the American Dialect Society, founded in 1889, is, in a quiet way, establishing important scientific conclusions. The lay observer is hardly competent to make the finer distinctions in pronunciation that come within the scope of the trained phonetician, but he can be extremely useful in the collection of vocabularies. The Society asks him to do two things for each peculiar word or idiom that comes to his notice—"first, to fix the fact that it occurs in dialect usage in a sense differing from standard English, and, secondly, to fix the local limits of this usage." All such variations from the normal "represent just the class of facts on which the scientific study of language rests. Many of them are survivals from older periods of the language; many new words are formed or adopted to meet a real need arising from new conditions, and so ultimately gain a place in standard English; and many variations in pronunciation illustrate phonetic changes which are constantly going on in language development. The philologist needs to know, from a more reliable source than the ordinary novelist furnishes, the exact locality where each word or phrase is used (implying, also, a knowledge of where it is not used); just what it means to those who use it, and what local variations there are, if any, in its form and meaning; just when each new word came in or old one went out of use." If, perchance, our little sermon on the use and abuse of dialect should turn even one misguided realist from a grinder-out of dialect "copy" for the newspapers into an exact observer of local usage for the scientific purposes of the Society, it will not have been preached in vain.

#### TRIBUTES TO MISS ROSSETTI.

Christina Rossetti died on the 29th of December—not, as the press despatches announced, on the 31st. The funeral service was held at Christ Church on January 2, and the body was interred at the Highgate Cemetery. Among the mourners were Mr. W. M. Rossetti, his four children (Olivia, Mary, Helen, and Arthur), and Mr. Theodore Watts. The service included "The Porter watches at the gate" and "Lord, grant us grace to mount by steps of grace," two of the poet's most familiar hymns.

The English literary press is strikingly unanimous in appreciation of Christina Rossetti's great gifts, and in expression of its sense of the loss to English literature in her death. "The Literary World" writes as follows:

"Looking to the quality of her poetry, Miss Rossetti attained to the level, at least, of Mrs. Browning, which means that she has been excelled by no English woman poet. The most exquisite sense of music in the choice and collocation of words, and an etherealised imagination soaring from the sphere of the earthly to that of the spiritual, are the characteristics of her poems."

This passage is from "The Academy":

"In perfection of form and melody of words, her lyrics are comparable to those of Shelley: they set themselves to mental music as they are being read. No poet of the time, not Tennyson or Swinburne—though their range may be far wider—excels her in the mere matter of technique. None has such a pure note, such a bird-like sweetness."

"The Athenæum," after grouping Christina Rossetti with Walter Pater as the two greatest English writers of those who have died during the year, says of her that she

"Was not merely the greatest poet among Englishwomen of our day, she was a writer who can be classed with all but the very greatest poets of the century. Her art was of that admirable kind which conceals the process of art; never was verse so careful to seem careless; and she was not less remarkable for the passionate intensity of her emotion—generally religious emotion—than for the intense simplicity of its expression."

And "The Saturday Review" begins its long and sympathetic editorial article with the following:

"By the death of Christina Rossetti, literature, and not English literature alone, loses the one great modern poetess. There is another English poetess, indeed, who has gained a wider fame; but the fame of Mrs. Browning, like that of her contemporary, and, one might almost say, companion, George Sand, was of too immediate and temporary a kind to last. The very feminine, very emotional, work of Mrs. Browning, which was really, in the last or first result, only literature of the L. E. L. order carried to its furthest limits, roused a sort of womanly enthusiasm, in precisely the same way as the equally feminine, equally emotional, work of George Sand. In the same way, only in a lesser degree, all the women who have written charming verse—and how many there have been in quite recent times!—have won, and deservedly, a certain reputation as poetesses among poetesses. In Miss Rossetti we have

a poet among poets, and in Miss Rossetti alone. Content to be merely a woman, wise in limiting herself within somewhat narrow bounds, she possessed, in union with a profoundly emotional nature, a power of artistic self-restraint which no other woman who has written in verse has ever shown."

Even more interesting than the above critical estimates, is the personal sketch contributed by Mr. Theodore Watts to "The Athenæum." Speaking of Miss Rossetti's physical sufferings and the fortitude with which she met them, Mr. Watts says:

"Throughout all her life she was the most notable example that our time has produced of the masterful power of man's spiritual nature when at its highest to conquer in its warfare with earthly conditions, as her brother Gabriel's life was the most notable example of the struggle of the spiritual nature with the bodily when the two are equally equipped. It is the conviction of one whose high privilege it was to know her in many a passage of sorrow and trial that of all the poets who have lived and died within our time, Christina Rossetti must have had the noblest soul."

Of another aspect of her character, we read:

"Her intimacy with Nature—of a different kind altogether from that of Wordsworth and Tennyson—was of the kind that I have described on a previous occasion as Sufeyistic: she loved the beauty of this world, but not entirely for itself; she loved it on account of its symbols of another world beyond. And yet she was no slave to the ascetic side of Christianity. No doubt there was mixed with her spiritualism, or perhaps underlying it, a rich sensuousness that under other circumstances of life would have made itself manifest, and also a rare potentiality of deep passion. It is this, indeed, which makes the study of her great and noble nature so absorbing."

Mr. Watts singles out "Amor Mundi" as being perhaps Miss Rossetti's masterpiece.

"Here we get a lesson of human life expressed, not didactically, but in a concrete form of unsurpassable strength, harmony, and concision. Indeed, it may be said of her work generally that her strength as an artist is seen not so much in mastery over the rhythm, or even over the verbal texture of poetry, as in the skill with which she expresses an allegorical intent by subtle suggestion instead of direct preachment."

#### THE FUTURE OF THE NEGRO IN FICTION.

For nearly fifty years the negro has occupied a place of more or less prominence in American song and story, and his future position therein cannot but be a matter of interesting conjecture. It was Stephen Foster's plantation melodies, more than anything else, perhaps, that first showed the negro in his true artistic character; and that whole coterie of songs, "Uncle Ned," "O Susanna," "Old Folks at Home," "Nelly Was a Lady," etc., forms still the most unique and vital addition this country has contributed to the psalmody of the world. Though not the work of a Southern poet, they bore the stamp of genuineness upon their face, and carried the ne-

gro's pathos and humor all over the land. This was before Mrs. Stowe furnished the spark that kindled into flame the smouldering fires of liberty; but when "Uncle Tom's Cabin" helped to give the negro a country, it gave him at the same time a "local habitation and a name" in the literature of that country. But all was not yet done. It was not the *suffering* side of the slavery question that showed the negro in his richest artistic values, not tales of the wretchedness and misery of his condition that pictured him in his greatest beauty. They held him fast-bound within the realm of philanthropy, and the artist found there no high lights. It needed the softening touch of a calmer hand to show him in his true colors; and this it remained for another generation to furnish. Mr. Thomas Nelson Page has collected the distilled sweetness of all that is loveliest in the negro character, and held it for all time in a chalice of pure gold. He has given to us and to the future the old-fashioned darkey pure and simple, with his humor, his pathos, his self-sacrificing humility, his cultured politeness, his noble loyalty; and like unto him is Mr. Joel Chandler Harris's "Uncle Remus," whose name has become a household word throughout the length and breadth of the land. These two, more than any other writers, have struck the key-note of the negro's artistic value, and have given him as a vital element to literature. They know him and they love him, and their pictures are not overdrawn or idealized. Messrs. Page and Harris have had a host of coadjutors, each one lending a hand to give the negro a permanent place in the literature of our time, and all combining to perpetuate the memory of the sweetest and best of the race.

But what of the future? The next decade at farthest must show us the last of the old-fashioned darkey of "befo' de war," and it is he—the pitiful remnant of him—that we have grown to love and revere in fiction. We love him all the more because we know his end is fast approaching; and when he is gone, who will take his place? The generation that is to come after him, and grow old in our midst as he grew old, is not worthy to unloose his shoe latches, and surely can never fill the place in our hearts that he holds.

Freedom brought the negro his God-given birth-right, but at the same time it robbed him of his greatest beauty, since it lost for him a background whereon to show the noblest elements of his character. So long as he lives, the negro must possess, in a certain degree, artistic merit: his light-hearted Bohemian nature will keep this for him as surely as the sun shines, for it is the sun that brings it about; but he has lost his finest *motif*. The black "dude" with cane and eyeglass furnishes richer material to the caricaturist and the evolutionist than to the artist, and the story-teller of the future will have no easy task to keep the negro up to his present valuation for readers of fiction.

Shreveport, Louisiana.

LAVINIA H. EGAN.

## COMMUNICATIONS.

## LAFAYETTE AND MIRABEAU.

(To the Editor of THE DIAL.)

In reply to Professor von Holst's communication in your last issue, taking exceptions to certain passages in my review of his "Lectures on the History of the French Revolution," I wish to say that my article was not intended to be a complete review of the Lowell Lectures. I preferred, as I prefer in this rejoinder, to consider mainly the characters of Lafayette and Mirabeau, which, in the Lectures, were contrasted, with what seemed undue exaltation of the one and undue depreciation of the other; of the one, who, says Professor von Sybel, "lost forever the dignity which good morals and honesty give"; and of the other, "of proved disinterestedness, of constant care for the public good, respect for others, authority of conscience, loyalty, good faith, of motives beautiful and pure," whom Taine presents as a type of the cultivated and intelligent liberals of 1789 who did not submit to Napoleon. ("Régime Moderne," Vol. I., p. 74.)

Professor von Holst's charge relating to the conduct of Lafayette on the 5th and 6th of October, 1789, is supported on the authority of the light and frivolous Camille Desmoulins. The unsubstantiated opinion of Sainte-Beuve, fairest of critics, that this charge against Lafayette has been abandoned or disproved, the author thinks is not sufficient. I hope there will be nothing "surprising" to Professor von Holst in the opinions of the eminent historians whom I now cite in support of Sainte-Beuve's opinion. Professor William Smyth says: "As Lafayette was one of the first movers of the Revolution, no proper justice is ever done to his character by those who were unfriendly to the Revolution; it must therefore be maintained that it is quite clear, from the concurring accounts of all writers, that he made every possible exertion to prevent this fatal measure, this march upon Versailles, and that with an afflicted and foreboding heart he accompanied the populace and the soldiers to take the chance of moderating and directing, as well as he could, a dreadful mass of men whom he could no longer control or bring to reason." Count Montlosier, a distinguished conservative leader in the Assembly, says in his Memoirs: "In the midst of these disorders I was a witness of the grief of Lafayette," etc. (pp. 30-33). Taine (*Révolution*, Vol. I., pp. 133-136); Michelet (Vol. I., pp. 376-378); Mignet (Vol. I., pp. 130-138); and Henri Martin (Vol. I., p. 94), give full narrations of the facts concerning the 5th and 6th of October, confirming the opinion of Sainte-Beuve. Finally I quote on this subject the closing sentences of an exhaustive note of Thiers (Vol. I., pp. 375-378): "No one, moreover, dared to deny, in the first moments, a devotion which was universally recognized. Later, party spirit, perceiving the danger of according virtues to a constitutionalist, denied the services of Lafayette; and then commenced that long calumny of which he has not ceased to be the object." Poor Camille!

I have not consciously mistated the conclusions of the author upon subjects referred to. When he declares, with italics, that Mirabeau was a party by himself, and knew beforehand that it would be so, and was determined that it should be so, he thinks, nevertheless, that he has somewhere stated overlooked facts which explain the meaning of what he had previously said, and that unbiased readers will see the palpable fallacies of my in-

ference. Let the appeal, then, go to unbiased readers. The reminder that Mirabeau did not enter public life for the first time in 1789 is unimportant. In his youth he served a few months in the army. Just before the Revolution, Calonne gave him an obscure employment at Berlin, below any grade of rank in the diplomatic body. (Loménie, Vol. III., p. 648.)

The author could not well avoid stating damaging facts in relation to the character of Mirabeau. The question at issue is, whether the vices and venalities of Mirabeau explain his failure to win that confidence of colleagues which is necessary to a public man. I did not, and cannot now, go fully into the matter. Readers will examine for themselves Professor von Holst's explanation in which he attempts to reduce the charge of venality to what is warranted by the facts. Briefly stated, they are: That, for generations, public opinion considered it a matter of course that anybody who had a chance to get money from the king should improve it; that Mirabeau was paid for work done and services rendered (Vol. II., p. 170); that the "salary" he received was an incident, and not an end (p. 174); that if the accusers of Mirabeau cannot convict him in regard to "two questions"—what were his promises, and how they were kept,—it is evident that though his relations to the court were surely not altogether free from blame, his own opinion of them must in the main be correct (p. 179). And to help the reader to reach these startling conclusions the author states his own opinion, already quoted from Vol. II., pp. 180-81. That opinion is further sustained by the supposition that it never entered into the heads of Count Mercy and Count La Marek that taking money from Louis XVI. could throw the slightest reflection upon Mirabeau (Vol. II., p. 170). In the correspondence between Mirabeau and La Marek often quoted by Professor von Holst, confidential letters from La Marek to Mercy show the real opinion of La Marek in relation to Mirabeau (Vol. II., pp. 282, 283, 354). On the 6th of December, 1790, Count La Marek writes to Count Mercy: "The queen will be more and more the object of my entire attention, and I shall seize with care all occasions to be useful to her. It is principally in that respect that I continue my relations with Mirabeau. What a man he is! Always upon the point of flying into a passion, or losing heart; by turns imprudent from excess of confidence, or cooled by mistrust, he is difficult to direct in things which require perseverance and patience. I will fulfil my task to the end, Count, although I discover more and more all its difficulties." (Vol. II., p. 286.) His task was to watch Mirabeau and to hold him faithful to the court. Again he writes to Count Mercy: "Permit me to tell you briefly my present position. I cannot dissimulate that it becomes more and more difficult. On one side I have to watch every moment the impetuous character of Mirabeau, and to bring him back when he escapes from me, or when he escapes from himself. Very passionate, very strong for a sudden attack or at a given moment, he is often incapable of remaining five days in the same measure and direction." (Vol. II., p. 530). The real truth seems to be that nobody could fully trust Mirabeau, who had "lost forever the dignity which good morals and honesty give."

Evidence of the venality of Mirabeau was found in the secret vault of Louis XVI., November 20, 1792. Then the judgment of France upon the conduct of Mirabeau in his relations to the court was first expressed. By unanimous vote of the Constitutional Convention, all



honors previously bestowed in perpetuation of his memory were withdrawn, on the ground that no man can be esteemed great without virtue. D. L. SHOREY.

Chicago, January 20, 1895.

#### A MURDEROUS TRANSLATOR.

(To the Editor of THE DIAL.)

It was an honor which the culture of America duly appreciated, when, in 1893, one of the most famous of contemporary French writers came to our shores and visited us in our native haunts. It is a privilege to read a description of ourselves as seen by unprejudiced, but not unfriendly, eyes. M. Bourget is a decided advance over "Max O'Rell" as an accurate and penetrating observer—or, at least, as a describer of what is observed. Eminently psychological and analytical, he does not, like the latter, deliberately sacrifice truth for effect, and whether we think his descriptions just or not, we are bound to admit that they are sincere.

But whether we think M. Bourget just to us, or not, no one, I believe, wishes to see injustice done to him. And if ever a writer suffered at the hands of his translator, it is M. Bourget at the hands of the newspaper syndicate that is giving his "Outre-Mer" to the American public through the medium of the newspaper press. *Traduttore, traditore*, say the Italians. But the translator of "Outre-Mer" is more than a traitor—he is a murderer. No comparison with the original, nor even a knowledge of French, is necessary to discover the execrable nature of his work. The style, as it comes to us in the newspaper, is awkward, dull, and tiresome,—and these are faults of which M. Bourget is never guilty.

A comparison with the original, which is now running in "Le Figaro," discloses blunders which ought to put to shame any college freshman. Scarcely a dozen consecutive lines can be selected in which mistranslations (some of them the most puerile), unwarranted liberties with the text, and monstrous atrocities committed upon the English language, do not occur. In its best parts it is scarcely more than a verbatim transliteration, in which the graceful and forceful French idiom, transferred bodily to the English, becomes utterly emasculated and meaningless.

A few illustrations, selected at random, will abundantly show what wrong is being done to a great French writer and critic. In speaking of the American young lady, he says: "Je crois plus sage de reconnaître que la coquetterie n'est pas plus que le reste, chez l'Américaine, une affaire d'entraînement." This is how the inspired translator got it: "I think it safer to recognize that in coquetry, no more than in the rest, the American girls allow themselves to be carried away." Every paragraph is teeming with such meaningless drivel as this, and the unthinking reader goes away with the impression that it is M. Bourget who writes it. An average freshman, with one semester's training in French, ought to know that *faire une expérience* means "to make an experiment," not "to undertake an experience"; that a *complet omnibus* is not a "complete omnibus"; and that when Bourget says: "Ce que l'Amérique me donnera je l'ignore," he does not mean that he "ignores" what America has in store for him.

The fact is that this translation as a whole is heavy, lumbering, and unreadable. And it is especially to be deplored, as this charming writer has only too rarely been brought within the reach of the non-French-reading American public.

HERMAN S. PIATT.

University of Illinois, Jan. 18, 1895.

#### "NONSENSE VERSES" IN THE SCHOOLROOM.

(To the Editor of THE DIAL.)

May I be permitted to place myself in the publicity of your columns on the side of the Chicago parent whose views in your issue of January 16 you class as the "climax of absurdity"?

It is of course greatly to be regretted that a Chicagoan or anybody else of man or woman's estate should remain in ignorance of the delicious nonsense that "Lewis Carroll" has written; but are not many of his whimsicalities for "grown up" folks rather than for children's powers of understanding and appreciation? Their inimitable foolery is calculated, at least in some instances, to give sensitive children an erroneous impression of several facts in natural history, and a hurtful idea of the principles that make for ethics, long before the little folks are old enough to sift out and enjoy the fun of the verses. This in itself should be a good argument for keeping the nonsense out of school-books, and permitting each parent for himself to judge what he shall set before and what keep from his little ones.

The fact that many men and women of exquisite sympathies were "brought up" on "Mother Goose" does not prove anything in favor of the more bloodthirsty or more untruthful of those jingles. Loving and wise counter-influences made the crooked teachings straight, or supplanted them altogether. The people whose infant feelings were not cruelly lacerated by the "Babes in the Wood" tale, for instance, are to be congratulated, not held up as examples in favor of treating other little folks to the same harrowing yarn. It is a good deal like breaking a butterfly upon a wheel to argue against the dear old nursery twaddle, and the new nursery twaddle of the inimitable "Carroll" order; and nobody wishes to argue against it for anybody old enough to understand its fun and pay no attention to its distortions. But much of it is pernicious for babies in the kindergarten and primary stages. Infant impressions, those of very young childhood, are among the most lasting we ever receive; is it not, then, not only the better part of discretion but the whole of valor, and, what is more to the point, the whole of tender-hearted parenthood, to see to it that, however attenuated the truth may be that is taught children, it shall still be truth, or ideality on truth lines?

DINAH STURGIS.

120 East 34th St., New York, Jan. 22, 1895.

#### THE GARDEN WHERE NO WINTER IS.

"Se Dio ti lasci, lettor, prender frutto  
Di tua lezione." —DANTE.

Behold the portal; open wide it stands,  
And the long reaches shine and still allure  
To seek their nobler depths, serene, secure,  
And watch the waters kiss the yellow sands  
That gentle winds stir with their sweet commands;  
These stately growths from age to age endure,  
These splendid blooms glow in the sunlight pure,  
These wondrous works of human hearts and hands.

Over the charmed space no storm may rest,  
The gloomy hours avoid the magic bound;  
Homer dwells here, Virgil, and all the blest  
Whose perfumed color lights Time's mighty round;  
Pluck the fruit freely, reader, and partake,—  
God wills it,—for the enchanted Soul's fair sake!

LOUIS J. BLOCK.

### The New Books.

#### FROUDE'S ERASMUS.\*

Whether a new life of Erasmus was especially needed or not; whether Mr. Drummond's pleasant volumes of a few years since did not sufficiently cover the ground for the present generation; whether Mr. Froude has given us any fresh light on a somewhat difficult and evasive personality,—these are questions which might be discussed at length without perhaps reaching a very definite conclusion. Severe critics might complain that when an Oxford Professor, occupying the chair just vacated by a minute and exact scholar like Freeman, chooses to turn over old and familiar materials and handle a well-known and interesting character, we may fairly expect some novelty of exposition, some side-lights from contemporary history, and the unearthing of a new fact or two. It looks rather as if Mr. Froude, recognizing that his strength lay in other directions, had frankly chosen to disappoint all such expectations, and content himself with an easier task, the exercise once more of his marvellous power of vivid presentation, and be satisfied, not with collecting new matter, but simply with setting before us the old in a striking arrangement, and telling a familiar story as only such accomplished tellers of stories can. It is not light from any new quarter that he offers us, it is only stronger and more effective light, with vivid dramatic contrasts and perhaps a little over-emphasis of shadows. This is Mr. Froude's weakness as a historian: over-emphasis of light and shade. His pictures are brilliant, not with diffused daylight, but with the whites and blacks of a sketch in charcoal touched with chalk, with the dazzle and gloom of electric light and shadow on the stage. His method, however, is vivid, and the immediate effect is striking. He compels attention. He makes Erasmus live again, as modern and intelligible as Principal Tulloch of St. Andrews or Professor Jowett of Balliol. There may have been more penetrative and interpretative lives of Erasmus written, but there will hardly be one more readable. This is Erasmus as the ordinary reader will know him for many a year to come.

It is impossible not to notice, in this attractive volume, that tendency to bear on hard upon special defects of his hero which so vexed a

friendly public in Mr. Froude's treatment of Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle. A biographer may give nothing but the truth, yet present that truth distorted by disproportion. Mrs. Carlyle seems to be always fighting "bugs" and guarding her highly-strung husband against crowing cocks and cackling hens; but probably these were smaller facts in her life than they appear in the biography. And Mr. Carlyle's later years were doubtless saddened by a recognition of how imperfectly he had valued the wife whom he had lost; yet he had perhaps been less neglectful than he is pictured for us, and less remorseful than his reiterated wail of penitence would lead us to suppose. Probably they lived like other married couples of genius, with frequent jars, yet substantial harmony; and a wise biographer had been careful not to heighten the coloring of two such masters of vigorous expression as Thomas and Jane Carlyle. Disproportion becomes distortion.

And so with Erasmus. It is not a pleasant trait in the great scholar that is revealed to us in his imperative demands and somewhat shameless entreaties for money. You see the excuses for him. You see that scholars who give themselves up to unremunerative labor must somehow live, and live at the expense of somebody; that their choice is between the "patron and the jail," and that the ugly necessity sometimes is forced upon them of pushing their claims rather clamorously, of displaying too evidently the emptiness of their purses and the insistent cravings of their stomachs and backs. And it is all well enough to give us a letter or two to show this not altogether delightful side of the social conditions of the time in which Erasmus lived, and the readiness of Erasmus to submit to them. But a letter or two would suffice. Mr. Froude certainly errs in over-pressing the painful fact of the beggary of mediæval scholarship. He makes Erasmus so modern, by the vividness of his presentation, that he appears as shameless as if he were a sturdy tramp or begging letter-writer of our very different day. The effect of such reiteration is as if you should paint a portrait deep red whose subject blushed easily and frequently; or should describe a climate by recording a succession of thunderstorms. They doubtless occurred, and were perhaps characteristic; but there was a good deal of pleasant weather unmentioned besides.

Certainly Mr. Froude is a delightful translator. The letters of Erasmus in his version are like original letters of a master of pithy English. They are indeed cleverer in Mr.

\*THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF ERASMUS. By J. A. Froude, Regius Professor of Modern History, Oxford. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Froude's rendering than in the original, for the frank compression and condensation which he has given them. The epigrams are clearer-cut for the omission of redundancies, and they come closer together. Mr. Froude's treatment is something better than justice: it is enrichment and benefaction.

Nothing could have more perfectly the air of well-bred ease and happy familiarity than Mr. Froude's lectures. He has gained by not taking his task too seriously. Where Freeman had worried you with conscientious, painstaking, and scrupulous repetition, Mr. Froude touches lightly here and there, and glides on with a graceful rapidity. He is not a professor over a class of plodding students, — rather he is an artist conducting a party of friends through a great gallery, and now by a word and now by a nod or a gesture calling their attention to a masterpiece or casually indicating a failure. We feel in good company all the while—company not too much in earnest, not taking life too seriously, but highly cultured and disposed to lavish its pleasantness generously. Was it with a foreboding that the walk through the historic gallery was for the last time?

So much for Mr. Froude's part in the volume. What now of the greater part furnished by Erasmus? Certainly there are few more brilliant letters in literature than those which supply the ample material for this life. Erasmus had the eye of an eagle, and the talon of an eagle also. His pen was like an etching-needle; his humor and wit the biting acid that made the swift sketch permanent upon the plate. He saw things as they were, and what he saw became alive upon the page. Those were not the days of hasty correspondence, of notes tossed off in a moment and mailed with the ink hardly dry, to escape the waste-basket but one day more. A letter then was as well worth elaboration as a sonnet or triolet now. But if you have sense, wit, humor, and knowledge of the world, you can elaborate verse or prose into a playful perfection that is delicate art, but seems careless nature and unconscious ease. It is good to have these picturesque and lively letters of Erasmus once more brought to the surface to illuminate the ever-interesting and not yet exhausted scene of the Renaissance and the Reformation. As a man of letters, Erasmus must ever hold a foremost place with Lucian and Clarendon and Voltaire and Lamb and Thackeray, for rare painting of character.

But it is impossible to treat Erasmus as a

mere man of letters. He was a power and authority at the time when the great overturn of Christendom took place. He was preëminently the scholar and writer of his age, when scholarship and literature were just emerging from the pedantry of the schoolmen. He lived in the day of Leo and of Luther. He saw his time with most penetrative insight. He understood men as few of his contemporaries understood them, as scholars rarely understand them. He detected the flaws in Luther's method, and the shames in the old order into which he and Luther alike had been born. There was no corruption of the Church which he had not scourged with a whip of small cords. He was seventeen years older than Luther. Why did he not take the lead and do the work of Luther more wisely and not less thoroughly? As we see the divisions and distractions which have followed upon the Reformation, we are disposed sometimes to ask angrily and impatiently, Might not Erasmus have made Luther unnecessary? Might he not have led a reform in the Church which should not have precipitated a schism? Were it not good to-day if Christendom had never been rent as by an earthquake; if a process of gradual enlightenment and piecemeal reform had been begun with Erasmus at its head?

Men have the defects of their qualities, our French friends say. The judicial temperament is not what you want in an advocate. The president of a peace association is not the precise stuff for a commander-in-chief. Ever since the days of the Reformation, men have complained of Erasmus for not being Luther. As well complain of an electric light, with its fine fibre all a-tingle and a-quiver within its film of glass, for not being a roaring fire on the hearth. Erasmus had his office; Luther his. Erasmus was a search-light, flinging its piercing ray into all the dark corners of Christendom and pitilessly revealing every sin and shame. Come down, O electrician, from your secret tower, and build us a blaze that shall consume these foulnesses which soar above us and make the air noisome for honest men to breathe. I cannot come down, is the answer. My business is to give light and direct its rays where they are needed. I am busy devising methods for shedding clearer and fuller light. And I have grown to feel that with light enough on the lives and the things they will shrivel of themselves. Anybody will fetch you a firebrand and set the foul heaps in a blaze. And I must see to it also that the hasty fires



do not consume these endless precious things which my search-light reveals to me under and behind the rubbish heaps.

After all, if Luther gave the world his doctrine of justification, if he brought St. Paul once more to the front and gave us the freedom of faith, the fearlessness of Christ, Erasmus restored to the world the New Testament; gave access not to Paul only, but to John and Jesus; he gave us an example of the unbiassed spirit that sees the soul of good in things which are evil; he gave us the suggestion of critical research; he was that rare broad churchman who can tolerate high churchmen and value low churchmen, while impatient of the corruption and superstitions of the one and the recklessness and cant of the other. Conservative in action, he was radical in thought. Because dreading revolution, he was earnest for reform. He loved the unity of Christendom too well to lightly cut himself loose from the ancient Church of his Fathers. The iconoclastic zeal of Luther was foreign to his taste, his temper, and his conscience. In many particulars I suspect what Luther called "dirt" Erasmus called "color." He was too clear-sighted to suppose that the Church could be tumbled about the ears of Christendom without doleful damage to truth and soberness, to love and purity. He would use a broom and scrubbing brush where Luther would use a torch or a battle-axe. Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground? said Luther. Let it alone this year also, said Erasmus: those were the words of Jesus, it must be confessed.

And yet the world is profoundly Luther's debtor, and beside his heroic form that of Erasmus seems but pinched and small. The reformer of Rotterdam was clear light without heat, keen intelligence without moral intensity. Never man saw more clearly, but he lacked not manhood, he was brave as a lion; a more timid spirit had chosen his side and stepped behind the earthworks of one party or the other; Erasmus stayed out in the open and took blows on either hand, but he lacked wrath and fierce indignation. His humor qualified and tempered and half put out his fire. He discerned the evil and was not angry, but petulant and half-amused with the wicked every day. He was a good scorner, not a good hater. He was the scout not the warrior, the detective not the executioner. To see the evil and expose the evil, and delight himself a little in the clearness of his vision and the keenness of his dissection, and then to feel that his work was done, and

that it was for others to cart away the rubbish and clear up the room,—that was Erasmus. Intelligence without character may at times be invaluable because unprejudiced and judicial, but it imperfectly serves its age. It stands back in the shadow, or lies out in the offing, when the struggle and the storm begin. It would like to hate and love more intensely, but these things are beyond its power. But it has been worth while also only to have seen and said the truth.

C. A. L. RICHARDS.

#### THE MOUNTAINS OF CALIFORNIA.\*

A noble book on a noble subject is Mr. John Muir's "Mountains of California." A certain purity and nobility of expression is found therein; a distinct fitness of style, as if the words were evoked and ranged in dignified order by the influence of the grandeur of the mountains and the beauty and wildness of the mountain denizens portrayed. No one in whose veins runs a drop of patriotic blood could read this story of the mountains without burning with pride at the pictures of the natural beauties of our native land. And the book has elements to attract the attention of the lovers of each and every form of natural beauty and interest. The subjects of the chapters partly display the varied aspects shown of mountain life: The Sierra Nevada; The Glaciers; The Snow; A New View of the High Sierra; The Passes; The Glacier Lakes; The Glacier Meadows; The Forests; The Douglas Squirrel; A Wind Storm in the Forests; The River Floods; Sierra Thunderstorms; The Water-Ouzel; The Wild Sheep; In the Sierra Foot Hills; The Bee Pastures. But the titles alone give no hint of the varied wealth of information conveyed. Take the simplest chapter-heading—"The Snow"—of the shortest chapter. Many of us think we know much of snow; some of us, that we know all about snow; a few, that we know of mountain snow; but to all of us the chapter gives new knowledge. It opens with a description of the early mountain snows and the preparation of the wild mountaineers, deer, birds, bears, marmots, and wood rats, for the winter. Then we learn, in beautiful crisp words, of the wonderful action of snow in the forests. Then comes the surprising and striking account of the winter burial of the rivers

\*THE MOUNTAINS OF CALIFORNIA. By John Muir. Illustrated. New York: The Century Co.

and small lakes, of the snow bridges and the tunnels. Then is given a word-picture of the rare and beautiful Snow-banners, part of which I quote:

"The most magnificent storm phenomenon I ever saw, surpassing in showy grandeur the most imposing effects of clouds, floods, or avalanches, was the peaks of the High Sierra, back of the Yosemite Valley, decorated with snow-banners. Many of the starry snow flowers, out of which these banners are made, fall before they are ripe, while most of those that do attain perfect development as six-rayed crystals glint and chafe against one another in their fall through the frosty air and are broken into fragments. This dry fragmentary snow is still further prepared for the formation of banners by the action of the wind. For, instead of finding rest at once, like the snow which falls into the tranquil depths of the forests, it is rolled over and over, beaten against rock ridges, and swirled in pits and hollows like boulders, pebbles, and sand in the potholes of a river, until finally the delicate angles are worn off and the whole mass reduced to dust. And whenever storm winds find this prepared snow dust on exposed slopes where there is a free upward sweep to leeward, it is tossed back into the sky and borne onward from peak to peak in the form of banners. . . . After being driven into the sky again and again it is at length locked fast in bossy drifts, or in the womb of glaciers, some of it to remain silent and rigid for centuries before it is finally melted and sent surging down the mountain sides to the sea. . . .

"Yet the occurrence of well-formed banners is rare. I have seen but one display that seemed perfect. This was in 1873 when the summits were swept with a wild Norther. . . . When making my way from the valley to an overlooking ledge the peaks of the Merced group came in sight over the South Dome, each waving a resplendent banner against the blue sky as regular in form and as firm in texture as if woven of fine silk. In four hours I gained the top of a ridge above the valley, 8000 feet high, and there in bold relief like a clear painting appeared the imposing scene. Innumerable peaks, black and sharp, rose grandly into the dark blue sky, their bases set in solid white, their sides streaked and splashed with snow, like ocean rocks with foam; and from every summit, all free and unconfused, was streaming a beautiful silky, silvery banner from half a mile to a mile in length; slender at the point of attachment, then widening gradually as it extended from the peak, till it was a thousand to fifteen hundred feet in breadth; each peak with its own refulgent banner, waving with a clearly visible motion in the sunglow, and not a single cloud in the sky to mar their simple grandeur.

"In the foreground of your picture rises a majestic forest of Silver Fir blooming in eternal freshness, the foliage yellow-green, and the snow beneath the trees strewn with their beautiful plumes, plucked by the wind. . . . Mark how grandly the banners wave as the wind is deflected against their sides; how trimly each is attached to the very summit of its peak, like a streamer at a masthead; how smooth and silky they are in texture, and how finely their fading fringes are penciled on the azure sky. See how dense and opaque they are at the point of attachment, and how filmy and translucent toward the end, so that the peaks back of them are seen dimly, as though looking through ground glass. Observe how the banners belonging to the loftiest summits stream free across intervening notches and passes.

And consider how every particle of this wondrous cloth of snow is flashing out jets of light."

The main causes of the beauty of this display of snow banners were, first, the favorable direction of the wind — no south wind ever flaunts a perfect snow banner; second, the great abundance at that time of unconfined snow dust; third, the peculiar conformation of the slopes of the peaks. In general, the south sides are convex, while the north sides are concave, and the wind ascending those concave curves converges toward the summit, carrying the snow up with it, from whence it floats out in horizontal banners. The difference in form between the north and south slopes was produced by the difference in glaciation to which they were subjected. The north sides were hollowed by residual shadow-glaciers that never existed on southern sun-beaten slopes. Thus do shadows determine the forms of these lofty mountains, and also of the snow banners which the wild winds hang on them.

There is no doubt that the average reader for pleasure, or even for information, unless of scientific bent, looks somewhat askance at a chapter on glaciers; but no one will skip Mr. Muir's fascinating chapters on glaciers, glacier lakes, and glacier meadows. Previous to 1871 the California glaciers were unknown. That year Mr. Muir discovered the Black Mountain Glacier of the Sierra, and since then many others. The charming glacier lakes are many in number—over fifteen hundred. There are traces of many more that now are vanished with the glaciers that gave them birth. The largest is Lake Tahoe, twenty-two miles long by ten miles wide. The story of their birth and growth reads like a prose poem. They contain no fish, but plenty of frogs and larvæ of insects and beetles. Humming wings glance over them, robins and grosbeaks feed on the berries of their borders, ouzels sing love-songs over them: beautiful fringes of flowers nod over these little byworlds of lives for the naturalist. A special beauty, which Mr. Muir notes, of the glacier meadows, is the smooth, silky lawn of their surface, enamelled with flowers, never ragged or unkempt, but perfectly kept and adjusted. He says it produces in the beholder such a deep summer joy that the mind is fertilized and stimulated by the sight, just like a sun-fed plant.

Mr. Muir gives one chapter to the Douglas squirrel. We are thus made acquainted with him:

"He threads the tasseled branches of the pines, stir-

ring their needles like a rustling breeze; now shooting across openings in arrowy lines, now launching in curves, glinting deftly from side to side in sudden zigzags, and swirling in giddy loops and spirals round the knotty trunks; getting into what seems to be the most impossible situations without sense of danger; now on his haunches, now on his head; yet punctuating his most irrepressible outbursts of energy with little dots and dashes of perfect repose. He is, without exception, the wildest animal I ever saw—a fiery, sputtering little bolt of life, luxuriating in quick oxygen and the woods' best juices. One can hardly think of such a creature being dependent, like the rest of us, on climate and food. But after all, it requires no long acquaintance to learn he is human, for he works for a living. His busiest time is in the Indian Summer. Then he gathers burs and hazel-nuts like a plodding farmer, working continuously every day for hours; saying not a word; cutting off the ripe cones at the top of his speed, as if employed by the job, and examining every branch in regular order, as if careful that not one should escape him; then, descending, he stores them away beneath logs and stumps, in anticipation of the pinching hunger-days of winter. He seems himself a kind of coniferous fruit,—both fruit and flower. The resin essences of the pine pervade every pore of his body, and eating his flesh is like chewing pine gum."

The water-ouzel, most fascinating singer and interesting actor, also has a chapter full of interest and beautiful description.

Perhaps the most marked characteristic of the book is the intense love shown by the author for all forms and aspects of nature. The trees are his brothers; he knows their forms, their voices, the different sounds of their rustling leaves, he reads their soul; the birds and beasts are his friends,—how he delineates their features! the flowers are his sweethearts; he can never cease telling their endearing traits. Of the mountains he speaks his love with no uncertain voice:

"To the timid traveler fresh from the sedimentary levels of the lowlands, they seem terribly forbidding; but though hard to travel, none are safer. For they lead to regions that lie far above the ordinary haunts of the devil, of the pestilence that walks in the darkness. Accidents in the mountains are less common than in the lowlands, and these mountain mansions are decent, delightful, even divine places to die in, compared with the doleful chambers of civilization. Fear not to try the mountain passes. They will kill care, save you from deadly apathy, set you free, call forth every faculty into vigorous enthusiastic action."

The book is wholly self-forgetful,—in that respect a keen contrast to the self-conscious nature-studies of Thoreau. It is almost man-forgetful,—though occasional bits of description appear, like this humorous account of the furred Mono Indians:

"Suddenly, as I was gazing eagerly about me, a drove of gray hairy beings came in sight, lumbering toward me with a kind of boneless, wallowing motion like bears. Suppressing my fears, I soon discovered that, although

as hairy as bears, and as crooked as summit pines, the strange creatures were sufficiently erect to belong to our own species. They proved to be nothing more than Mono Indians dressed in the skin of sage rabbits. They were mostly ugly, and some of them altogether hideous. The dirt on their faces was fairly stratified, and seemed so ancient and so undisturbed it might almost possess a geological significance. The older faces were, moreover, strangely blurred and divided into sections by furrows that looked like the cleavage-joints of rocks, suggesting exposure on the mountains in a cast-away condition for ages."

The picture of the old miners in their exaggerated dotage, and the collections which they had gathered like wood-rats, shows deep human interest and pathos.

I do not like to end the reviewing of this book, any more than I like to close its pages, over which I linger, longing to quote the fine thoughts, the fair and symmetrical sentences I ever find; to give the noble expression of the sublimity and power of the winds, told in that fairly passionate chapter, "A Wind Storm in the Forest"; to tell the revealed meaning of the gestures of the trees; to recount the wonderful, almost incredible, story of the beautiful, brave wild sheep, the analytical study and history of the giant sequoias, the picture of the hanging gardens with larkspurs eight feet high, and that final revel in sweetness, the chapter on bee pastures, those flowery wildernesses whose gladsome praise in melodious phrase makes a picture sweeter than that of honied Hybla, rosier than that of heathery Hymettus.

ALICE MORSE EARLE.

#### THE TECHNIQUE OF THE DRAMA.\*

Gustav Freytag's "Technik des Dramas" has long been a standard work in Germany, and the announcement that an English translation was about to appear was doubtless received with pleasure by all who are acquainted with the excellence of the original. The book is, in fact, one of the few works that are no sooner made accessible than they become indispensable.

Freytag is eminently qualified to speak with authority on the subject here treated. With a thorough knowledge of the ancient drama, as well as of the dramatic literature of the principal modern languages, he combines the practical training of the successful playwright and a perfect acquaintance with the requirements of the stage. As a result, the tone of

\* FREYTAG'S TECHNIQUE OF THE DRAMA. Translated by Elias J. MacEwan. Chicago: S. C. Griggs & Co.



the book he has produced is admirably practical and objective. The author has avoided all subjective theorizing. He offers no treatise on æsthetics, no original ideas on the philosophy of art. Feeling, as he says, that such treatises usually leave the young author in the lurch just where his real difficulties begin, he has here given, for the guidance of his successors, the results of his own experience, the lessons taught by long years of authorship, with the usual alternation of failure and success.

The book is primarily addressed to young authors with dramatic aspirations, intended to point out to them the best path to the temple of fame, and to warn them against the many pitfalls along the way. But it appeals also to another and far wider circle of readers. The discussion of the rules of dramatic composition is so sane and judicious, the analyses of dramatic masterpieces, both ancient and modern, are so skilful, the criticism is so straightforward, that the book cannot fail to be interesting and valuable to any student of the drama. In a book written for a German public, it is natural that a large part of the illustrations should be chosen from the works of Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller. And yet Shakespeare, who has been so thoroughly naturalized in Germany that he is almost looked upon as a German classic, receives perhaps more attention than any other author; and a considerable place is given also to the Greek drama, especially to Sophokles.

The body of the "Technique" is divided into four chapters, dealing respectively with Dramatic Action, the Structure of the Drama, the Structure of the Scenes, and the Characters. In the opening chapter the author discusses first the development of the "dramatic idea" from the raw material offered by history, literature, or contemporary event. To the question, "What is dramatic?" the answer is, "Neither an act *per se*, nor an emotion *per se*, but only passion that leads to action, and events as they influence the human soul." The discussion of the difference between a "dramatic person" and the flesh-and-blood reality is interesting, and may be recommended especially to the attention of the "Veritist." After an excellent exposition of the law of Unity, the author discusses in turn the necessity of probability and importance in the action, dramatic movement and climax, and the nature of the tragic.

In the second chapter the author considers, in its various aspects, the structure of the drama as a whole; thus, he discusses "action" and "reaction," the rise, climax, and fall of the

action, the division into five acts, with the influences that produced this division, and its technical justification. The larger part of this chapter, however, is devoted to a thorough analysis of the origin and structure of the Greek drama, as exemplified in the works of Sophokles, followed by a similar study of the Germanic drama, with illustrations from Shakespeare. The third chapter continues the subject of structure, with a discussion of the scene, as the practical unit of action, determined by the technical demands of the stage, and demanding of the author a skilful arrangement of *motifs* within the limits of each such unit.

In the exhaustive discussion of the characters of the drama, Freytag points out their dependence on national characteristics and on the personality of the author, as well as on the action in which they are involved. The various sources of the action are fully treated, and the attitude of the dramatist toward his subject-matter is defined; a number of practical rules follow, on the unity of the characters, their comparative importance and mutual relations, the perspicuity of the action, and miscellaneous topics of importance to the playwright. Two brief chapters follow, dealing with externals; the fifth is devoted to a discussion of dramatic style and of the relative merits of prose and of various metrical forms as the vehicle of dramatic expression; the sixth, entitled "The Author and his Work," contains a number of practical hints of value to the dramatic writer in his workshop, and not without interest even to the general reader.

In view of the excellence and importance of Freytag's work, it is unfortunate that the English translation should fall so far short, as it does, of offering a satisfactory reproduction. Translation is no easy task at best, and the translator is pretty sure to find himself beset by many difficulties, whether he adopt the literal or the idiomatic method. And yet it is possible, by either method, to reproduce with tolerable accuracy at least the ideas of the original. The present translation, however, seems to combine all the disadvantages of both methods, without exhibiting any of their redeeming merits. The style of the translation, as English, is execrable; and at the same time hardly a page is free from more or less atrocious mis-translations, so that often the sense of the original is garbled beyond recognition. Let the reader judge for himself from a few typical examples:

"Alas, poetics has come down to us incomplete" (p. 5).

"Next after the struggles of the leading characters, the judgment of contemporaries, as a rule, or at least that of the immediately following time, prizes the significance of a piece" (p. 27).

"This internal consistency is produced by representing an event which follows another, as an effect of which that other is the evident cause. Let that which occasions, be the logical cause of occurrences, and the new scenes and events will be conceived as probable, and generally understood results of previous actions. Or let that which is to produce an effect, be a generally comprehensible peculiarity of a character already made known" (p. 29).

"For when young Protestantism had laid the severest struggles in men's consciences, and when the thoughts and the most passionate moods of the excited soul had been already more carefully and critically observed by individuals, the mode of conception natural to the middle ages, had not, for that reason, yet disappeared" (p. 59).

Such nonsense as this (and similar passages could be quoted *ad infinitum*) is hardly calculated to inspire the reader with admiration for the author's mental or literary equipment. But in each of these cases, what Freytag really says is perfectly sane, and correctly expressed as well.

Often the mistranslations of shorter passages are so grotesque that they become comical. Thus, we have the amusing statement that Shakespeare "created the drama of the earlier Teutons," where the original merely says that he was the first great dramatist of the Germanic race; the reference to "laws of creation," instead of laws of dramatic composition; the reference to the "deepening of mind and spirit produced through the sixteenth century, not only among the Germans, but also among the Romans," where the original of course refers to the Germanic and Romance nations.

Enough has been said to show that the translation is inadequate and often misleading, and that the reader will need to be constantly on his guard in using it. Even in this form, the book will be useful, for it supplies a need for which there seems to be no other provision in the English language; but it is deplorable indeed that its usefulness should be seriously impaired by the worse than indifferent quality of the translation. The publishers have done their part admirably; they have produced a handsome volume, with irreproachable typography, and few misprints.

JOHN S. NOLLEN.

THE Seventeenth Congress of the Association Littéraire et Artistique Internationale will meet next September at Dresden under the special patronage of the King of Saxony, who is said to have contributed a considerable sum to defray the expenses of the Congress.

#### MODERN THEORIES OF ELECTRIC ACTION.\*

A full account of the experimental investigations which made the late Professor Hertz the best known among the younger German physicists is given in his interesting volume entitled, "Electric Waves," which well merits the English translation recently published. When the papers of Hertz first appeared they created a profound sensation among the most advanced physicists. No work in physics in many years has attracted the attention of scientific men to such a degree. His apparatus was so simple, his methods so easily followed, and the results so striking, that all recognized the appearance of a star of the first magnitude.

Though the modern theory of electricity, as originated by Faraday, had been expanded and reduced to a mathematical system by the lamented Maxwell, yet twenty-five years had elapsed before Hertz, by his famous experiments "On the Propagation of Electric Action with Finite Velocity Through Space," convinced the scientific world of the superiority of Maxwell's theory over the older views. All of his researches are of recent date; the first was made in 1886, and the others followed in quick succession. The interest excited caused a great number of applications to be made for the papers in which the researches were published. Since it was impossible to comply with all these requests, Hertz decided to have them reprinted without change, but to add as an introduction a summary of his work, giving the history of his experiments, and stating his final theoretical views on the subject. He moreover added supplementary notes, because some of the opinions expressed in the account of his earlier investigations had changed. These notes contain, in addition, an account of results arrived at by other investigators who undertook similar experiments later.

The series of papers in the present volume consists of fourteen numbers, of which the third is an extract from a paper by von Bezold, who as early as 1870 observed electric waves and their interference. His results are practically the same as those arrived at by Hertz in his earlier investigations. The first part of the book contains a description of Hertz's exciter, by which very rapid electric oscillations or waves are produced; and of his receiver, or

\*ELECTRIC WAVES. Being Researches on the Propagation of Electric Action with Finite Velocity Through Space. By Dr. Heinrich Hertz. Authorized English translation by D. E. Jones, B.Sc., with a preface by Lord Kelvin. New York: Macmillan & Co.

secondary coil, by means of which he investigated their action. He follows these waves along conductors, studies the interference of direct and reflected waves, determines their velocity of propagation, etc.

Perhaps the most interesting number of the series is the eleventh, originally published in 1888, "On Electric Radiation." Hertz produces rays of electricity, and proves that they are propagated in straight lines; he polarizes these rays, reflects them by appropriate mirrors, shows that they can be refracted, determines the index of refraction for the refracting medium,—in short, performs all the experiments with which we are familiar in the study of light. Hence electric waves belong to the same category of ether vibrations as light and heat waves; or, as he himself says, "we might designate the rays of electric force as rays of light of very great wave length." The volume closes with two papers containing a mathematical treatment of the phenomena. The English title of "Electric Waves" was suggested by Lord Kelvin (Sir William Thomson). He also wrote the preface to the English edition, giving a short outline of the development of modern theories of electric action.

It is interesting at this time to note that Hertz began his studies, which led to such remarkable results, on account of a problem proposed to him some fourteen years since by Professor von Helmholtz, who has so recently died. The writer well remembers Hertz about that time as the second assistant in von Helmholtz's laboratory. Hertz's work has recalled attention to the remarkable researches of our own Joseph Henry, which, as Lord Kelvin has truly said, "came more nearly to an experimental demonstration of electro-magnetic waves than anything that had been done previously."

We now have, as a result of Hertz's work, one ether for heat, light, electricity, and magnetism; and this volume, containing Hertz's electrical papers, will be a permanent record of the splendid consummation now realized.

HENRY S. CARHART.

THAT "The Saturday Review," while changing its editor, has not changed its soul, is borne upon us by such things as this late bit of criticism: "Let us by all means, if we can do it sensibly, discuss the relative merits of Oliver Wendell Holmes and James Russell Lowell, both excellent writers of humorous verse, who deserve a place somewhere between Calverley and Mr. Austin Dobson; but, in the name of common-sense, let us not do it as if we were discussing the relative merits of Keats and of Coleridge."

#### THE PHILOSOPHIC RENAISSANCE IN AMERICA.\*

The nine books lying before me are an interesting sign of the times. Drifting together from various quarters, and finally tied up in one packet and calling for notice in one review, they present at once an extraordinary diversity and an extraordinary unity. The diversity is in the various methods of approach to philosophy which they represent in contemporary thought; the unity is in a certain underlying trend and aim which, disguised by differences in terminology and of school attachment, is none the less real and assured—even though some of the authors represented might horrify at the thought of kinship with some of the others. It accordingly seems better worth while for the nonce to take this casual collection of books as an index of the present direction of thought, than to subject each severally to an exhaustive analysis.

At the outset the collection is characteristic in this: it has within it five books by American writers, including one by a thinker of German birth, but now at home in America and conducting two of its most thoughtful periodicals; it has within it two translations from the German, and one from the French, and one book by a German acclimated in England rather than in the United States. It does not take a very long look backward to realize the significance of the possibility of any such collection. It marks at once the extent to which English and American thought is breaking loose from its long-time local prepossessions and insulation, and is endeavoring to assimilate the thought of continental Europe; and it marks also the vigor of the philosophic renaissance—for such we may fairly term it—in the United States. Add to this that one of the books (Professor Müller's) deals expressly with an old philosophy of India, while another (Dr. Deussen's) is pretty well saturated with the same Vedantic lore, though attempting to adjust it (*via*

\* THE ELEMENTS OF METAPHYSICS. Being a Guide for Lectures and Private Use. By Dr. Paul Deussen; trans. by C. M. Duff. New York: Macmillan & Co.

THREE LECTURES ON THE VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY, Delivered at the Royal Institution in March, 1894. By F. Max Müller, K.M. New York: Longmans, Green, & Co.

GENETIC PHILOSOPHY. By David J. Hill. New York: Macmillan & Co.

HEGEL'S PHILOSOPHY OF MIND. Trans. from the Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences, with Five Introductory Essays, by William Wallace, M.A. New York: Macmillan & Co.

OUR NOTIONS OF NUMBER AND SPACE. By Herbert Nichols, Ph.D., and William E. Farnson, A.B. Boston: Ginn & Co.

THE DISEASES OF THE WILL. By Th. Ribot; trans. by Merwin-Marie Snell. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co.

THE PSYCHIC FACTOR. An Outline of Psychology. By Charles Van Norden, D.D. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

BASAL CONCEPTS IN PHILOSOPHY. An Inquiry into Being, Non-Being, and Becoming. By Alexander T. Ormond, Ph.D. New York: D. Appleton & Co.

A PRIMER OF PHILOSOPHY. By Paul Carus, Ph.D. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co.



Schopenhauer) more closely to modern thought, and we see that the existing ferment of thought is cosmopolitan.

An equal variety meets us if we attempt to classify the books from the standpoint of their subject matter. The collection is not fairly representative on the ethical side, but apart from that it contains four books which deal expressly with constructive philosophical work, three with psychological inquiry, while Professor Müller and Dr. Deussen again stand for that craving for something beyond either the rationally philosophical or the experimentally demonstrable which is so marked a feature of the present; for though we may conventionally ignore the matter, yet occultism and Orientalism in one form or another are most emphasized traits of the existing popular consciousness.

Of the translations, not much need be said. The Ribot has so long been familiar to students of psychology that it is only necessary to welcome its appearance in English, and express thanks to the translator for his satisfactory work: indeed, all of the translations issuing from the "Open Court" press reach a satisfactory standard of workmanship. Mr. Wallace has been known for years by his translation of Hegel's "Logic," and his attempt with the "Philosophie des Geistes" is equally successful, while it will introduce Hegel to many in a new aspect — as among other things a psychologist, and, according to his lights and the state of knowledge when he wrote, a physiological psychologist. Mr. Wallace's introductory essays are suggestive, ingenious, and literary; they represent that phase of the Oxford philosophical tradition which delights in philosophy for its culture value (to use the current cant phrase), and sits very easily to its severer and more scientific sides—the tradition which found its culmination in Jowett's introductions to the Platonic dialogues. Mr. Wallace is more serious and thorough-going in his methods than Jowett was; but there is the same occasional complete in consequence, the same occasional sacrifice of ideas to the needs of clever statement, and the same undercurrent of feeling that it is hardly worthy of an English gentleman and scholar to be too anxious about definiteness and precision in thought. Mr. Wallace has probably carried the art of translating Hegel as far as it can be carried upon present methods. It is quite possible that a translator may sometime arise who will give up the attempt to find technical terminology to correspond to Hegel's philosophical dialect, and set about doing in English what Hegel himself did in German (as Aristotle had done before him in Greek)—hunting up pregnant words of idiomatic speech, and squeezing the philosophic meaning out of them. As for Dr. Deussen's work, what shall we say? The translation is well done; but was the original worth translating? The form is largely a *quasi* geometrical method; definitions abound, which, like all philosophic definitions that precede, instead of summing up discussion, beg the question; disjunc-

tions, which ingeniously conceal the problem while appearing to simplify it, are numerous. And through it all is the gospel of the Vedanta, with Schopenhauer as its prophet and expounder. Those who already know their Spinoza and Kant and Schopenhauer will hardly get much out of the book; those who want a philosophy not for philosophic but for æsthetic and emotional purposes may easily turn from, say, theosophy to Dr. Deussen's constructions of the universe. Speaking of the Indian philosophy brings me to Professor Müller's book, which, like all his recent work, is pedantically popular in style, written largely, if not *ad captandum*, at least *ad audiendum*, and yet manages to convey in a wonderfully easy way a large amount of useful information to him who can separate that information from its graceful entwinings with Mr. Müller's own opinions and feelings about a great variety of subjects.

Mr. Van Norden's title, "The Psychic Factor," covers an attempt to state the more elementary facts of psychology with especial reference to many of the more recent biological investigations, and with some emphasis on the phenomena of dreams, hypnotism, etc. Mr. Van Norden is a long way from being a systematic thinker, but he has a keen eye for salient facts, and a power of lucid expression. His book may serve as a popular summary of many of the points of chief interest in current psychology. Mr. Nichols gives the method and results of the application of experimental psychology to the problems of number and space. The work is really a laboratory monograph, and will appeal to the specialist. It is symptomatic of the courage and energy of the modern psychologist, that he completely ignores the attempt of the metaphysician to shut off a little inclosure of concepts, like number and space, warning all experimental methods to keep off. Mr. Nichols's treatise on "Notions of Number and Space" shows that experimental methods may be applied with some hope of fruit to the "metaphysical" categories, but strikes me as suggestive rather than as conclusive. The book in form has a way — irritating to me — of stating on one side a high general and vague conclusion, and then one hundred and nine very specific conclusions, but with none of the *media axiomata* which are most helpful to other workers.

There are left for consideration three attempts to deal constructively with philosophy. Mr. Ormond, in his "Basal Concepts in Philosophy," attempts the deepest flight. He takes up seriously and earnestly the problem of the relation of God to the finite world, and hopes to add something to its solution by a reconstruction of the triad of Hegelian categories of Being, Non-Being, and Becoming, through a conception of Non-Being as that which the Absolute Being or Spirit continually wars against and suppresses, but which never, as it does in Hegelianism, becomes a moment of Being. It is obviously out of the question to discuss Mr. Ormond's

argument in a brief review, but I cannot refrain from pointing out two things. One is that, to many, Mr. Ormond's entire problem will seem self-made, factitious. This problem is, how an absolute can give rise to a finite, the perfect to an imperfect. There will be many who will want to know whence Mr. Ormond gets his definition of an absolute, and his standard of perfection; who will inquire, what is the ground of the assumption that the absolute is absolute apart from what he terms the "finite," and how Mr. Ormond is so certain of the nature of perfection as to assume, without discussion, that "perfection" can get along without having as factors of itself those things which Mr. Ormond labels imperfection. There are some who prefer a world with night as well as day, of pain as well as pleasure, of temptation as well as of a goodness which to them would seem tedious without the struggle of conquest. This may be very poor taste on their part, but it represents a standpoint which is not so much rejected as ignored by Mr. Ormond. My other remark is that to many Mr. Ormond's solution of the problem of evil will appear in unstable equilibrium between what he would term, I suppose, a pantheistic optimism or monism, and the old-fashioned orthodox dualism of personal God and personal Devil. The mind can formally follow the idea of an Absolute Being which in thinking itself has to exclude all taint of Non-Being, and so keeps up at once the thought of Non-Being, and the warfare to exclude it. But the mind will have a feeling that a genuine Absolute would not have to spend time in contending with what, after all, is but its own shadow. I do not wish to seem to deal flip-pantly with a serious effort to think out a fundamental problem, but one can hardly escape the conclusion that Mr. Ormond's Absolute is engaged in setting up a man of straw, and then—never quite knocking the straw man down, because in that case it would lose this negative exercise of exclusion through which it maintains its own positive identity. Mr. Ormond does not appear to realize how essentially one his position is with that of Fichte.

Mr. Hill's "Genetic Philosophy" deals amiably and readably with a large number of questions of genesis and evolution, bringing to bear upon problems of the origin of life, feeling, consciousness, art, morality, etc., a considerable range of reading, and an easy style. Unfortunately, the book is marred by a certain pretentiousness, manifest even in its title. The work is in no sense itself a philosophy of genesis, or genetic in the sense of using a thorough-going evolutionary method. It simply discusses lucidly and with considerable discrimination certain specific genetic questions. The claim is even more emphatic and offensive in the introduction, where the book is offered as affording a way out of existing philosophic confusion.

Mr. Carus in his "Primer of Philosophy" has put before us in a thoughtful, yet easily grasped form, an attempt to combine the data and methods of

modern science with certain metaphysical concepts, resulting, as he says, in a reconciliation of philosophies of the types of Mill's empiricism and Kant's apriorism. This spirit of synthesis and mediation is prominent throughout the book, which is thoroughly worth reading and study. It is doubtful, however, if it will fulfil the pious wish of the author and set the stranded ship of philosophy afloat again; indeed, were the ship of philosophy stranded, I doubt the ability of the united efforts of the whole race to get it afloat. It is wiser to think of the ship of philosophy as always afloat, but always needing, not, indeed, the impetus of any individual thinker, but the added sense of direction which the individual can give by some further, however slight, interpretation of the world about.

JOHN DEWEY.

#### RECENT AMERICAN POETRY.\*

There comes to the life of most poets a period when poetic inspiration flags, when the thought no longer finds free and almost spontaneous expression in rhythmical numbers, but needs rather to be jogged by a striking incident or the flow of emotion about some theme forcibly brought into contemplation. Under such stimulus, the old poetic energy revives, and even produces a fair counterfeit of the fluent expression of earlier days. But "the sound is forced, the notes are few," and we must accept the finer artistic sense that comes with years, and the poetic self-consciousness more completely realized, as the only possible compensations for the lessened volume and momentum of the stream of inspiration. Some such reflections as these must come to readers of the new volume of verse which bears the name of Mr. Aldrich upon its title-page; although the lesson is not so apparent in the case of one who has been more or less consciously an artist

\* *UNGUARDED GATES*, and Other Poems. By Thomas Bailey Aldrich. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

*POEMS NEW AND OLD*. By William Roscoe Thayer. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

*IN SUNSHINE LAND*. By Edith M. Thomas. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

*NARRAGANSETT BALLADS*, with Songs and Lyrics. By Caroline Hazard. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co.

*SONGS FROM VAGABONDIA*. By Bliss Carman and Richard Hovey. Boston: Copeland & Day.

*LINCOLN'S GRAVE*. By Maurice Thompson. Chicago: Stone & Kimball.

*INTIMATIONS OF THE BEAUTIFUL*, and Poems. By Madison Cawein. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

*THE WIND IN THE CLEARING*, and Other Poems. By Robert Cameron Rogers. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

*MADONNA*, and Other Poems. Written by Harrison S. Morris. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

*THE FLUTE PLAYER*, and Other Poems. By Francis Howard Williams. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

*A PATCH OF PANSIES*. By J. Edmund V. Cooke. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

*PENRYN'S PILGRIMAGE*. By Arthur Peterson, U. S. N. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

throughout his career as it might be in another's. The fine heroics upon our national "Unguarded Gates" offer a striking illustration of the power possessed by a noble theme to quicken into renewed flame the failing embers of the poetic fire.

"O Liberty, white Goddess! is it well  
To leave the gates unguarded? On thy breast  
Fold Sorrow's children, soothe the hurts of fate,  
Lift the down-trodden, but with hand of steel  
Stay those who to thy sacred portals come  
To waste the gifts of freedom. Have a care  
Lest from thy brow the clustered stars be torn  
And trampled in the dust. For so of old  
The thronging Goth and Vandal trampled Rome,  
And where the temples of the Cæsars stood  
The lean wolf unmolested made her lair."

The considerable proportion of personal and occasional poems in the present collection helps to illustrate our introductory thesis. And here again, the inspiration being given, we have verses that Mr. Aldrich has never surpassed, personal tributes of the most heartfelt gratitude conveyed in the most polished verse. In a previous review we quoted from a volume by Mr. Aldrich his tribute to Tennyson. Let us upon this occasion quote another, written before the Laureate's death, and appropriately linking his name with that of the greatest among his contemporaries.

"When from the tense chords of that mighty lyre  
The Master's hand, relaxing, falls away,  
And those rich strings are silent for all time,  
Then shall Love pine, and Passion lack her fire,  
And Faith seem voiceless. Man to man shall say,  
'Dead is the last of England's Lords of Rhyme.'

"Yet—stay! there's one, a later laureled brow,  
With purple blood of poets in his veins;  
Him has the Muse claimed; him might Marlowe own;  
Greek Sappho's son!—men's praises seek him now.  
Happy the realm where one such voice remains!  
His the dropt wreath and the unenvied throne.

"The wreath the world gives, not the mimic wreath  
That chance might make the gift of king or queen.  
O finder of undreamed-of harmonies!  
Since Shelley's lips were hushed by cruel death,  
What lyric voice so sweet as this has been  
Borne to us on the winds from over seas?"

The poems inscribed to Lowell, Holmes, and Grant should also be mentioned as among the best of the volume. In one of his sonnets Mr. Aldrich says:

"I must have known  
Life elsewhere in epochs long since fled;  
For in my veins some Orient blood is red,  
And through my thought are lotus blossoms blown,"

and the statement is illustrated by two of those Eastern apoloques which have been so noteworthy a feature of his preceding volumes. And then there are sonnets and lyrics and delicate cameo-like quatrains in the new volume, and we may well give thanks that a poet is left among us who can do all or any of these things as artistically as they are done here.

Ten years ago, writing over the signature of "Paul Hermes," Mr. William Roscoe Thayer published a volume of verse entitled "The Confessions of Hermes, and Other Poems." He has now gath-

ered into a volume of "Poems New and Old" the best of the earlier pieces, and a much larger number of later ones, among the latter being several upon Oriental themes. When we reviewed the volume of ten years ago [June, 1885] we gave credit to the earnest purpose of the writer, but were compelled to comment somewhat severely upon the technical shortcomings of his verse. In spite of a perceptible advance in his technique, Mr. Thayer's verse is still deficient in the true rhythmical quality, and is still weighted with prosaic turns and phrases. In fact, the very things that we have marked as among the best in the new volume turn out to have been already published in the older one. Mr. Thayer is at his best in such a poem as the sea-shore "Reverie," from which we now quote:

"Sweet is it over shelving sands to stroll  
When the victorious tide begins to lose,  
And watch the stubborn-yielding billows roll,  
Or look upon the mid-sea's scudding hues,—  
Sweet is it then to loiter and to muse."

To the mental vision of such a loiterer scenes like these appear:

"Here rise the saucy, unobsequious waves  
To wet the sandals of the Danish King;  
Here spectral pirates crawl from nameless graves  
And count again their booty, quarreling;  
And here Pizarro draws the fatal ring.

"Columbus kneels exultant, and unfurls  
The cognizance of Christ and Ferdinand;  
Here weeping mothers and bewilder'd girls  
Cry out 'God speed ye!' to the *Mayflower* band,  
Long after sails are hidden from the land.

"And Bonaparte here reconstructs his doom,  
Reversing Waterloo, or peers afar  
Till Breton cliffs along the horizon loom  
In bitter-sweet mirage; this sodden spar  
Bore Nelson's duty-sign at Trafalgar."

Such verse as this, fed by culture and the historical consciousness, is always acceptable, although not poetry in any high sense.

"In Sunshine Land" is a collection of verses ostensibly for children, but they have a serious poetic value, and must be classed with such books as Miss Rossetti's "Sing-Song," Marston's "Garden Secrets," and Stevenson's "A Child's Garden of Verses," all three of which works they at times suggest. Miss Thomas has exhibited in this volume a surprising daintiness of touch and delicacy of feeling; a surprising insight, also, into the workings of the child mind. Nothing could be lovelier in its way than "Sylvia and the Birds," with which the volume opens. But no extract could do justice to this glorified prattle. We will rather take the close of "The Ancient History of the Flowers":

"The red Lobelia lit a fire, and flung  
The embers all around a shady dell;  
The Daisy had a gypsy's crafty tongue,  
And youthful fortunes glibly would she tell!

"The Asters were a shower of stars that fell  
Amid the dimness of an autumn night,  
Witch-hazel woke, and cheerily cried, 'All's well!  
And met with smiles the dull November light."



"The Young Geologist," more nearly in the sober philosophic vein of the author than most of these pieces, may also be quoted:

" Comes one with searching look  
To read the great Stone Book;  
With youthful brows perplexed,  
He scans the rugged text.

" The knuckled rock he taps,  
And ancient thunders lapse,  
With deep imagined thud,  
On beaches of the flood.

" Old summers bud and bloom,  
And sink into a tomb:  
He sees them bloom again  
Upon the hearths of men.

" Life went with striding pace,  
He hunts upon its trace:  
A track—a rib—a tooth—  
What birds and beasts uncouth!

" Youth bends with baffled look,  
Above the great Stone Book;  
The title-page is dim,  
The *Finis* not for him."

Possibly a very young geologist may not see all these things, but the poem is very lovely for all that.

Miss Hazard's "Narragansett Ballads" versify a number of incidents of colonial times, including the Great Swamp Fight of 1675, and jog along in some such fashion as this:

" Connecticut had sent her men  
With Major Robert Treat;  
Each Colony in its degree  
Sent in its quota meet."

The verse is not exactly inspired, and we can hardly say more for the "Songs and Lyrics" of the second half of the volume, although there are at the close some rather pretty pieces upon Californian themes.

The "Songs from Vagabondia," which Mr. Bliss Carman and Mr. Richard Hovey have put forth together, are of very unequal quality. Interspersed among verses as irregular and reckless as the vagabond life they celebrate, we find here and there so noble a poem as "The Mendicant," or the stanzas called "Contemporaries." We quote from the former:

" O foolish ones, put by your care!  
Where wants are many, joys are few;  
And at the wilding springs of peace,  
God keeps an open house for you.

" But that some Fortunatus' gift  
Is lying there within his hand,  
More costly than a pot of pearls  
His dulness does not understand.

" And so his creature heart is filled;  
His shrunken self goes starved away.  
Let him wear brand-new garments still,  
Who has a threadbare soul, I say.

" But there be others, happier few,  
The vagabondish sons of God,  
Who know the by-ways and the flowers,  
And care not how the world may plod.

" They idle down the traffic lands,  
And loiter through the woods with spring,—  
To them the glory of the earth  
Is but to hear a bluebird sing.

" They too receive each one his Day;  
But their wise heart knows many things  
Beyond the sating of Desire,  
Above the dignity of Kings."

This poem, at least, we do not hesitate to ascribe to the lyricist of Grand Pré, however we may doubt the authorship of many among the others. And, in general, the contents of this volume offer a grouping that a sensitive ear can hardly miss. There are poems which are rollicking, and poems which are not. And the poems which are not are those which are the most pleasing and the most artistic.

" May one who fought in honor for the South  
Uncovered stand and sing by Lincoln's grave?"

asks Mr. Maurice Thompson, at the opening of his Phi Beta Kappa poem, read at Harvard a year ago. The apologetic question, we should say, needs no answer other than the poem itself, which is dignified, worthy of the subject and occasion, and soars to a higher flight than any of which we had thought the writer capable. One stanza of the thirty-six must suffice to illustrate both the form and the spirit of this poem.

" His was the tireless strength of native truth,  
The might of rugged, untaught earnestness;  
Deep-freezing poverty made brave his youth,  
And toned his manhood with its winter stress  
Up to the temper of heroic worth,  
And wrought him to a crystal clear and pure,  
To mark how Nature in her highest mood  
Scorns at our pride of birth,  
And ever plants the life that must endure  
In the strong soil of wintry solitude."

Mr. Cawein has now published five volumes of poems, yet the promise of the first volume is but imperfectly fulfilled by the last. Some measure of restraint has been imposed upon his native exuberance, but still more is needed; some approach has been made to definiteness of thought, but the inane yet remains too largely his element. Nor do we find the improvement in finish that so much practice ought surely to have brought about. In the long title poem, for example, we come upon so unpardonable a solecism as this:

" Idea, O God of Plato! one  
With beauty, justice, truth, and love:  
Who, type by type, the world begun  
From an ideal world above!"

He might as well have written

" Who, type by type, creation done  
Shape from the ideal world above."

Vague yearnings and nebulous imaginings form the stuff of too many of these pieces. Now and then, however, we come upon a pure and simple strain, as in these verses from "The Argonauts":

" Behold! he sails no earthly barque,  
And on no earthly sea;  
Adown the years he sails the dark  
Depths of futurity.

" Ideals are the ships of Greece  
His purpose steers afar;  
The skies, his seas; the Golden Fleece  
He seeks, the farthest star."

Of course it is not fair to criticise a lyrical Pegasus for preferring cloudland to earth, but it may be suggested that Pirene was, after all, an earthly spring, and that from its waters the fabled steed took renewed strength for flight.

A new-comer in the ranks, Mr. Robert Cameron Rogers, has taken poetic inspiration from much the same sort of themes as Mr. Cawein—from the mysteries of nature and the beauties of classic legend—but has made of it a more human use. Indeed, our prosaic comment upon the importance of keeping touch with earth might be richly illustrated by "The Wind in the Clearing," Mr. Rogers's title-poem; or, better still, replaced by these verses called "Theory," having for their text the Virgilian "Sunt geminæ somni portæ."

"She was so beautiful I could but follow;  
Her words seemed truth itself, I could not doubt,  
And so she led me out beyond the hollow  
Half-hearted living of the world about.

"Steep though the upward path, without misgiving  
I followed as she led, and more and more  
She grew to seem the guide to that true living  
That I had set my life to looking for.

"Footsore I grew and faint, through never nearing  
The goal, yet hopeful ever of the prize,—  
When suddenly, athwart my path appearing,  
I saw a distant gleaming barrier rise;—

"A sheer white wall, pierced by a single gateway,  
Guarding twin doors of ivory finely cut,  
Twin doors that as I neared them opened straightway,  
And passed my leader through and swiftly shut.

"But when I came and stood beside them knocking,  
And strove to move the strong-joined silent beams,  
Forth came a voice in sadness half, half mocking,  
'Thou fool, go back, this is the gate of dreams.'"

Mr. Rogers has written some spirited lyrics, some good classical idyls, some tender memorial pieces, and a few fine sonnets. From one of the latter—called "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills"—we reproduce the sestet:

"Sweet is the valley music,—sweet the hum  
Of bees,—but on beyond the upland mist  
Which sets false barriers to feeble wills,  
Are triumph tones, sonorous chords, that come,  
As from the touch of some strong organist  
Hidden amid the transepts of the hills."

Mr. Harrison S. Morris also is a new-comer among our American poets, and not often do we witness so successful a *début*. "Madonna and Other Poems" comprises over a hundred pieces, nearly every one of which bears the marks of careful workmanship, and no small number of which strike a note of exceptional delicacy and purity. The predominant trait of the collection is a feeling for nature at once so sympathetic and so just as to recall the masters. It is true that Mr. Morris employs the conventional imagery, but the lightness of touch and the daintiness of his work make acceptable this new use of the old material. Imbued with the romantic spirit, and having a distinctive dash of sensuousness (in the good Miltonic signification), these poems derive rather from Keats than from Wordsworth—to name

the two poets of whom we first think as the high priests of the cult of nature. We reproduce as a typical example the sonnet styled "A Touch of Frost."

"But yesterday the leaves, the tepid rills,  
The muddy furrows, wore a summer haze;  
The cattle rested from the yellow rays,  
Bough-cool and careless of the piping bills.  
No breath, no omen of the far-off ills  
Shuddered the air. To-day the hardened ways  
Lie drifted with the dead of summer days;  
The year lies sheaved upon the autumn hills.

"There in the sunburnt stacks the beauty sleeps  
Of beam and shower, dawn, and silver dew,  
Whisper of woody dusk, and upward deeps  
Of moonlight when the air is crystal blue.  
The bending farmer gathers into heaps  
A harvest with the summer woven through."

Most of Mr. Morris's pieces are in lyrical form, or the allied form of the sonnet; the most noteworthy exceptions are "Love's Revenge," a long Italian romance in six-line stanza, and "Amymone," a blank-verse idyl which might be printed among Landor's "Hellenics" without being detected as an interpolation by more than one reader out of ten.

Every poet nowadays has to write a "sonnet-sequence," and so Mr. Francis Howard Williams has accepted the inevitable. His sequence consists of a sonnet for every hour of the twenty-four, beginning with one o'clock in the morning, an hour when most people are oblivious of sonnets and all other vanities. Mr. Williams's work deserves considerable praise for its finish and wholesome sentiment. We quote the last of the series, the rhyme of the midnight hour:

"Oh! tender benison of darkness, cast  
Upon the throbbing bosom of the earth,—  
Dropt as a mantle over all the mirth  
And madness of the day,—thou ever hast  
A sweet compassion for us, and at last

A poppied peace. I gaze upon the girth  
Of heaven, heavy with the rare new birth  
Of beauty crescent through the spaces vast,

"The while the unruffled forehead of the night  
Lifts royally its diadem of stars;

Then, as a sleeper fares adown his way  
'Mid dreamy meadows, lying still and white,  
I thread the moonlit lane, pass through the bars,  
And close the record of an idle day."

Mr. Williams is not only a sonneteer, but a writer of lyrics, odes, and dramatic pieces, as well. His "Ave America" is a patriotic outburst which echoes the passion of Lowell, and is not unworthy of its model or its theme. There are some pretty pieces in lighter vein at the close of the collection, including a certain "Ballad to a Bookman" which readers of THE DIAL will probably remember. On the whole, Mr. Williams seems to have won his spurs, and the ranks of our minor poets must open to admit this new singer of very creditable song.

Mr. Cooke's "Patch of Pansies" is a collection of verse, mostly trifling, that has been contributed to newspapers and other periodicals. It calls for no particular comment, but a brief example may be given:

"Unwept, unhonored, and unsung'  
 Were not the worst of Fortune's bringing;  
 Dread, rather, thine own eyes and tongue  
 Unweeping and unsinging.  
 Unweeping for thy brother, bound  
 But struggling in the sombre Night,  
 Unsinging from thy vantage-ground  
 The happy tidings of the Light."

This is a clear-cut thought, well expressed, but it is hardly poetry. A curious feature of Mr. Cocke's volume is that one dedication does not suffice; the pieces are grouped, and for each group a distinct patron is invoked.

"Penrhyn's Pilgrimage" is a series of versified impressions of travel in the East—Japan, China, and Egypt. A couple of the stanzas to "Mount Fuji" will illustrate the form of the narrative and something better than the average of its inspiration.

"O matchless mount, the centuries die  
 And, moldering, form the forgotten past;  
 But still thy wooded base stands fast,  
 Still thy white dome salutes the sky!"

"At night I see thy snowy stair  
 Ascending through the circling storm;  
 At morn behold thy graceful form  
 Spring, like a flower, into the air."

Whatever the ambition of our verse-addicted traveller, he should have refrained from seeking to bend Lord Tennyson's metrical bow.

WILLIAM MORTON PAYNE.

#### BRIEFS ON NEW BOOKS.

*History of the  
 U. S. Navy.*

The second volume of Mr. Edgar Stanton Maclay's "History of the United States Navy" (Appleton) falls no whit behind its fellow in interest and graphic quality, though the incidents seem at times a little crowded. Over-compression, however, is a fault on the right side. Mr. Maclay is distinctly the narrator—not the historical generalizer or the critic of naval evolutions and armaments, like Captain Mahan. He tells a mainly unglossed story of the achievements of the American navy; and when he warms to his work—as in the accounts of the romantic sea-duels of 1812, where individual pluck and real seamanship counted, and before the gallant frigates of the Decatur and Barneys gave way to the ignominious tanks and "tea-kettles" of modern marine—he tells it in a style not unworthy of Cooper and Smollett. The volume opens with the events of the latter half of the war of 1812, thence passes on to the "Minor Wars and Expeditions" from 1815 to 1861 (including the war with Algiers, Perry's Japan Expedition, etc.), and closes with a detailed account of the naval operations of the Civil War. The text is liberally illustrated with wood-cuts, full-page and vignette, and there are plenty of maps and charts. The following extract from the London "Times" of December 30, 1814, touching the issue of the war of 1812, is interesting as showing how Englishmen of the

time regarded that event, which later writers have tried to explain away: "We have retired from the combat with the stripes yet bleeding on our backs. . . . To say that it [the national maritime reputation] has not hitherto suffered in the estimation of all Europe, and, what is worse, of America herself, is to belie common sense and universal experience. . . . Scarcely is there an American ship of war which has not to boast a victory over the British flag; scarcely one British ship in thirty or forty that has beaten an American. With the bravest seamen and the most powerful navy in the world, we retire from the contest when the balance of defeat is so heavy against us." This was written, be it added, before the news had reached England of the capture of the "Cyane" and the "Levant" by the "Constitution," the disabling of the "Endymion" by the "President," or the brilliant victory of the "Hornet" over the "Penguin." The story of our navy is a brilliant chapter in American history; and Mr. Maclay, writing *con amore* and with a good knowledge of his theme, has told it acceptably.

*Selections from  
 two English poets.*

The lover of literature will be satisfied to have upon his shelves nothing less than the complete works of the great poets, and we deprecate the practice of making "selections" from such men as Shelley and Tennyson, as much as we applaud the enterprise that has given us the entire poetic product of these men, as well as of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Arnold, and others (to say nothing of the "Globe" Shakespeare, the new Chaucer, and the new Dante) in single compact and carefully-edited volumes. But when it comes to poets not of the first rank, "selections" are as helpful as they are in the other case harmful. In fact, the really competent student and critic of poetry can hardly find a more praiseworthy task than that of carefully gleaning from the total product of some estimable but unmistakably minor poet the best parts of his work. The lease of life of such a poet is really renewed by this process; it gives him, as a rule, his one chance of impressing the generation that succeeds his own. Two books of the sort described are now before us: Professor George E. Woodberry's volume of "Selections from the Poems of Aubrey De Vere" (Macmillan), and Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton's similar selection from the poems of Arthur O'Shaughnessy (Stone & Kimball). Each of the books has a portrait and an introductory essay. The essay on Mr. De Vere is one of those pieces of serious critical workmanship that Mr. Woodberry so well knows how to produce. The characteristics of the poet are seized upon with unerring discernment. Mr. De Vere's poems are memorable for their "praise of the life of the lowly, in the old Christian sense," for their "praise of devotion, that loyal surrender to a man or a cause, which is one of the ideal passions of Love," and for their unflinching purity and faith. "In all this poetry, however its phases may be successively turned to the eye, or itself be inwardly



searched, there is one light and one breath — the light of the Spirit and the breath thereof." These are noble ideals, and Mr. De Vere has steadfastly lived up to them throughout his long and active career. The storehouse of Irish legend has been put by him to such poetic uses as few if any others have achieved, and poems upon these national themes necessarily make up the greater part of those included in Mr. Woodberry's selection. Yet it seems to us that the poet has done his best work in the briefer forms of the lyric and the sonnet, and these also are well represented. We Americans owe Mr. De Vere a peculiar debt of gratitude for his sympathy with our national cause during the years of civil dissension, a sympathy that found expression in many ways, and not least in the noble sonnets "On the Centenary of American Liberty" and "The American Struggle." Mrs. Moulton, whose intimate associations with the group of writers to which O'Shaughnessy belonged peculiarly qualified her for the task of editing a volume of his poems, has done her work admirably. The best things have been chosen from the poet's four volumes, and the sketch of O'Shaughnessy's life is tastefully and tactfully written. His was an uncompleted existence, and his last (posthumous) volume seemed to be "the tentative work of a poet in a transition state." "He had taken to himself a larger harp, but he had not yet completely strung it." Had he lived, the editor goes on to say, "he would have learned how to clothe his passion for humanity with the same tender grace with which in earlier days he sang the love of woman." As it is, no lover of poetry can afford to remain entirely unacquainted with his work, and Mrs. Moulton's volume will help to keep green his memory.

*Old English  
Ballads.*

The interest in folk-song and folklore is not only spreading but deepening; it surely does not deserve to be stigmatized as a fad. Neither the romantic enthusiasts, the Percys and Scotts of a century ago, nor the scientific investigators, the Childs and Grundtvigs of our own time, have been mere antiquaries and collectors; — the human interest of what they found, collated, and elucidated, is too great, and has been from the first too generally acknowledged. The interest in ballads to-day is simply the genuine thing we may always expect,

"When that which drew from out the boundless deep  
Turns again home."

But the "merry art is dead," the merry art of ballad-making. So we, robbed of the merry pastime of "lything and listening," must content ourselves with a ballad-book; and we may well content ourselves with such an one as Professor Gummere's "Old English Ballads" (Ginn), which gives us in three hundred pages the text of fifty odd ballads, and in nearly two hundred more an introduction, notes, a glossary, and appendixes on the ballads of Europe, on metre, style, and form, and on minstrels, and the authorship of ballads. Meeting the various

demands of what a ballad-book should be, this is the best edition for practical purposes. The text is open to criticism, especially of the subjective kind; but it is in the main sound, adhering to the traditions as preserved by Professor Child. Occasional emendations are made — but always from another text in Child; in the case of some ballads the text is composite; none of the letters peculiar to mediæval MSS. have been retained. In the full introduction, originally a series of five lectures delivered at Johns Hopkins University, Professor Gummere etches with a caustic pen the progress of ballad criticism from Herder down. For his own part he insists upon the distinction between popular ("communal") poetry and the poetry of the schools, which may attain popularity, be for the people, but is not in any sense poetry of the people. Full and minute references to a host of critics, scholars, and philologists, make this introduction, supplemented by the appendixes, a veritable introduction to the study of ballad literature. The notes and glossary are less full, leaving much desirable information to be obtained from sources — notably Professor Child's monumental collection — to which, after all, only the few have access. The printing of the ballad title, rather than the title of the book, at the top of the page, would have made reference easier and occasional browsing more satisfactory; it is a more serious mistake that there are in the notes no references to pages, nor any indication of the order in which the ballads are printed. But the real excellences of the work are of a rarer kind and are great.

*The Story  
of Venice.*

The forty-second volume of Putnam's "Story of the Nations" series is given to Venice, and is written by Mrs. Alethea Wiel. As the author modestly confesses in her preface, the complete and definitive account of Venetian history, whether in Italian or English, has yet to be produced. Meanwhile this work will serve presumably an honest purpose, as faithfully tracing the fortunes of that Republic, from her mysterious origin to the noble spectacle of her supremacy, and thence her moral degradation and final cession to Austria in 1798. A postscript of eight pages attempts to sketch the last century of her existence. The volume is furnished with a list of the Doges, a generous index, and numerous soft-toned prints of photographs and paintings. One misses here the style of a Symonds or an Oliphant; nay, he half suspects, after reading several chapters, that the authoress is an inveterate Freemanite, and thanks God she has "no style," — which is tenfold the affront to opalescent, silver-tongued Venice it could be to Sicily, perhaps. It is very easy to mistake the materials of history for history itself, especially when one has access to the Venetian archives, so full of the most detailed narrative — "a hundred piping voices"; yet accuracy of investigation is a strongly redeeming virtue when there have been so many picturesque dabs into the story, never sacrificing it for the sake of truth. "An author," said

Lowell, "should consider how largely the art of writing consists in knowing what to leave in the ink-stand." Many of Mrs. Wiel's sentences are weighed down with a surplussage of nouns or adjectives at the cost of their effectiveness. At the very beginning of the first chapter, for instance, we are informed that "it may be well to consider for a moment the manner in which the dwellings and habitations which formed the town took shape and being, and also what measures were adopted to secure the ground whereon these homes and houses were about to be established." This rhetorical trick of using in pairs words of nearly the same meaning amounts to a mannerism with the writer, or it were endurable, like the occasional sight of Siamese twins. But "entirety and completeness," "exaction and demand," "advantage and gain," "marks and indications," "slaughter and carnage," "attic or garret," "haughty and overbearing"—in Mr. Bagehot's words relative to Demosthenes' use of pebbles, we cannot dwell on it; it is too much. The style of the historian of Venice need not be over-ornate, but it should be picturesque and accurate.

*Critical studies  
of five authors.*

Five critical studies of impressionist type, having for their respective subjects Heine, Rossetti, Marston, Robertson of Brighton, and Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton, are grouped by Mr. Coulson Kernahan into a pretty volume called "Sorrow and Song" (Lippincott). This title is not happily chosen, for two reasons: it was preempted twenty years ago for a similar purpose by Mr. Henry Curwen, and it is not applicable to all of the contents of the volume, since Robertson was not a singer, and since Mrs. Moulton's life has not been, as far as we know, typically sorrowful, however pervasive may be the minor strain of her song. The style of these essays is somewhat pretentious, but is often marked by a grave beauty, and they contain much penetrating criticism inspired by a close sympathy with their subjects. A passage from the Rossetti paper has a well-deserved fling at the moralists who insist that art shall always be didactic: "The folk who can call nothing good unless it carry, dog-like, at its tail a tin can of noisy and rattling morality, and the critics who—forgetting that the very over-weighting of individuality, genius, as we call it, which gives a man such power on one side and in one direction, necessitates, by natural and inevitable law, a corresponding under-balance on the other—cannot award their grudging meed of praise for honest work done, without complaining that something else has been left undone, are a thankless set." The sentiment of this passage, by the way, is much better than the form. The study of Robertson gives due praise to that rare and noble character, and emphasizes the absolute sincerity that was his strength. It is the frequent lack of such sincerity in the profession which he adorned that makes the writer question "whether there is any educated class whose testimony carries less weight with the out-

side world to-day than that which follows religion as a profession." We fear that there is only too much truth in this suggestion. Mr. Kernahan's tribute to Mrs. Moulton is finely appreciative, and hardly claims too much for a singer of whom we have great reason to be proud. If three or four of the women among us who are, or have been, poets are likely to live, Mrs. Moulton is surely one of the number.

*Nineteen  
American  
Authors.*

"American Writers of To-Day" (Silver, Burdett & Co.), by Mr. Henry C. Vedder, is a series of nineteen brief essays upon as many American authors, all of whom but Mr. Parkman are still living. Nearly all of our best known men and women of letters are included. Since each of these essays is limited to about a score of pages, one must not look for any very exhaustive treatment; nor has the author aimed at such. His critical remarks are interspersed with a few biographical details, although anything like a real biographical sketch is not attempted. As for the author's criticism, it is mostly of the obvious current sort, and hardly rises above the commonplace. A generous impulse to set each subject in the best light is everywhere observable. A few minor points seem to call for comment. The opening statement that "America has as yet produced no poet who was poet and nothing else" is, of course, strictly true; but the implied contrast with England would nearly disappear upon scrutiny. The parenthetical observation upon Tennyson's "Timbuctoo" is too disparaging. The "Library of American Literature" is in eleven volumes, not ten. Mr. Howells's "One Villain" is not named Bradley Hubbard. To call "Huckleberry Finn" trash, while praising, for example, "A Yankee at the Court of King Arthur," is to upset criticism altogether. To say "We have æsthetes in plenty, like Wilde and Pater," is something like saying "We have poets in plenty, like Tupper and Tennyson." Finally, the remark that "American society is not quite guiltless of Becky Sharps" tempts us to ask why in the name of Heaven somebody does not discover one of them and thereby become the Great American Novelist.

*A philanthropist's  
life and letters.*

It is a rich and inspiring life that is portrayed in the "Life and Letters of Charles Loring Brace" (Scribner), which has been given us by his daughter. Mr. Brace is known to the world as the father of one of the greatest of modern philanthropic movements, and for forty years its moving force. The Children's Aid Society has acted directly upon five hundred thousand boys and girls; while the indirect benefits to society, in draining off from New York a vast number who would have developed into criminals, and in working out a scheme of beneficence that has been widely copied on both sides of the sea, cannot be estimated. The spirit, methods, and principles of this great charity are clearly brought out in this book, making it of special value to the

student of philanthropy. But its chief interest lies in the personality of the remarkable man who was himself more than his achievements. His clear insight into the needs of the wretched classes, and into the principles of true charity, is shown by the fact that the preliminary circular of the society, though far in advance of the thinking of the time, contained in the germ the whole vast and varied work which the society has since undertaken. This insight was united with a sober and critical judgment that made Mr. Brace a safe leader, and won for him the full confidence of the influential men of his city, and later of England and America. Enthusiasm for humanity, high spiritual and moral ideals, ardent patriotism, keen intellectual curiosity, great power in winning and keeping friends, and the success of his philanthropic work, all combined to make him a benefactor of his country and one of the foremost men of his time. The charm of this biography is due largely to the good taste and the sense of proportion of the author.

*The paragraph  
in English  
composition.*

The first doctor's dissertation that has come to us from the English Department of the University of Chicago testifies to the solidity and scientific thoroughness of the graduate work done in that institution. It is a monograph on "The History of the English Paragraph," by Mr. Edwin Herbert Lewis, a work of two hundred pages and of infinite industry. Mr. Lewis has read a considerable portion of English literature for the express purpose of determining the characteristics of the paragraph, from the ninth to the nineteenth century, from Alfred to Holmes. He has counted the words and sentences in many thousands of paragraphs, and tabulated the results, leading to the somewhat barren conclusion that the length of the paragraph has not decreased with the sentence-length. He also discusses the mechanical signs and rhetorical theories of the paragraph, and some of the latest investigations into the structure of English prose. In short, no labor seems to have been spared in bringing together or calculating all the facts of any conceivable interest bearing upon the subject of this monograph. But we must confess, while paying admiring tribute to the industry and scientific spirit of a study like this, that it is not exactly our ideal of the work to be aimed at by a great school of literary study. And the author's results and tabulations are probably of less value to him than the intimate acquaintance with our literature that must have been acquired during the prosecution of the investigation.

*A pungent  
collection  
of essays.*

A very pungent collection of essays is Mr. Walter Blackburn Harte's "Meditations in Motley" (The Arena Co.). The author has an ample stock of convictions (sometimes a little crotchety, perhaps) and he states them with refreshing point and candor. Mr. Harte's titles are: "On Certain Satisfactions of Prejudice"; "Jacobitism in Boston"; "About Critics and Crit-

icism"; "Some Masks and Faces of Literature"; and "A Rhapsody on Music." "Essays" is hardly the best descriptive term for the papers—Mr. Harte's hand being neither light nor his temper easy. Your true essayist is mostly a bit of a *poseur*, a minter of nice phrases, something of a literary Turveydrop, in fact, who is much more concerned about his "deportment" than his matter. Style, or neatness of style, is scarcely Mr. Harte's strong point. There are too many long sentences, too many parentheses, and one notes here and there expressions a shade too robust for the occasion, or for any occasion. What Mr. Harte lacks in urbanity he makes up in earnestness, his book being full of honest hammer-strokes of the plain truth that "shames the devil"—and a good many besides. A notable paper is the one called "Some Masks and Faces of Literature." Here the author draws a most stinging indictment of sensational and mercenary journalism that is doubly effective in that he is himself a journalist speaking "out of the bitterness of a full knowledge." The most tragical thing, Mr. Harte thinks, "about this horrible business of news-mongering, as we see it in this country, in its most degraded and impudent form, is not so much that it panders to the lowest elements of society, but that its huge vortex swallows up and debases and strangles so many fine, generous, noble natures, who might perhaps have made the world better for their having been in it. . . . 'The dyer's hand is subdued to what it works in.'" The volume justifies the growing literary vogue of its author.

*Dante Society's  
annual report.*

The thirteenth annual report of the Dante Society, just published (Ginn), gives the customary list of accessions to the Dante collection in the Harvard College library, and Mr. Paget Toynbee's index of proper names in the prose works and canzoni of Dante. This index is an abridgment of that just prepared by Mr. Toynbee for Dr. Moore's edition of the whole text of Dante, and it is something more, for it gives not only references but catch-words and phrases as well. The secretary, Mr. A. R. Marsh, announces the subjects for the Dante prize of one hundred dollars, to be competed for this year. He also appeals to Dantophilists everywhere to associate themselves with the work of the Society, and thus make possible the publication of some important projected works. The annual fee is only five dollars, and certainly there ought to be found in this country many more students of Dante than the sixty now reported as members. The society has nearly prepared the materials for a concordance to the lesser Italian works, similar in plan to Dr. Fay's concordance to the "Commedia." A concordance to the Latin works is also projected. Other suggestions are: "The systematic publication, with English translations, of the vision-literature of the Middle Ages; the publication of extracts from the works of the Schoolmen and of the Chroniclers; and a revision of Blanc's 'Vocabolario Dantesco.'"



*Child-life  
in Art.*

An extremely pretty and well-conceived little volume, that unfortunately came too late for inclusion in our Holiday notices, is Miss Estelle M. Hurl's "Child-Life in Art" (Knight). It has as its pictorial feature twenty-five full-page plates (one or two of which are slightly marred in the printing) after some twenty artists, ranging from Raphael to Mr. J. G. Brown — which is certainly a pretty far cry. Among the best plates are "The Sistine Madonna," Reynolds's "The Strawberry Girl," Van Dyck's "Mary Stuart and William III.," Gainsborough's "Rustic Children," a "Child's Head" by Bouguereau, Greuze's "La Cruche Cassée," and "The Meeting" by Marie Bashkirtseff. Velasquez, Bellini, Murillo, Lippo Lippi, and others, are also represented. The text is intelligently and pleasantly written, the author showing some knowledge of and much feeling for her theme. We venture to say that this daintily-bound and well-printed little work, though late in appearing, did not fail to find favor as a Christmas book; and it is by no means one of the ephemeral sort.

*More memories  
from Dean Hole.*

The Dean of Rochester, being called upon at the same time for more "Memories" and for a series of public lectures in the United States, concluded that he might kill two birds with a single stone, and so prepared a series of reminiscential chapters to be spoken and printed at the same time. For some weeks past he has been charming audiences in our large cities with his presence, while those unable to hear him may still read what he has to say in the newly published "More Memories" (Macmillan), "being thoughts about England spoken in America." Dean Hole is as richly anecdotal in this volume as in its predecessor of two years since, and the pages have the same unpretentious and genial charm. They are upon all sorts of subjects: bores, preachers, roses, the drama, Sunday observance, working-men, and English sports. These are but a few of the many themes touched upon.

## BRIEFER MENTION.

Professor Herbert Weir Smyth's monumental work on "The Sounds and Inflections of the Greek Dialects" (Macmillan), published by the Oxford Clarendon Press, takes up the task set aside by Ahrens half a century ago, and now does for the Ionic dialect even more than was done for the Doric and Aiolic dialects by the earlier scholar. We understand that the present volume, itself the fruit of many years' labor, is but the first instalment of a work destined eventually to embrace the other Greek dialects also, and to supplement Ahrens in his own field by means of the added results of nineteenth-century investigation.

"A Collection of Wild Flowers of California" is published (if we may use the word in this connection) by the Popular Bookstore of San Francisco. Miss E. C. Alexander has pressed and mounted the flowers, which include eight species, and which have kept their color

better than is usual with herbarian specimens. A number of sonnets and other verses have been written for the collection by Miss Ina D. Coolbrith and Miss Grace Hibbard, so that we may really call it a book, after all, and a very pretty book at that.

Mr. Joseph Knight is both compiler and publisher of an anthology that no user of tobacco, if he have literary tastes at all, will want to do without. It is called "Pipe and Pouch," and its contents are so happily selected as to justify its further title of "The Smoker's Own Book of Poetry." All the good things, anonymous or acknowledged, are here preserved for us, — Mr. Aldrich's "Latakia" and Lowell's numerous poems on the subject, Lamb's "Farewell" and Calverley's "Ode." The volume is very prettily printed and bound.

Mrs. Oliphant's two-volume work on "The Victorian Age of English Literature" (Lovell, Coryell & Co.) appears in a new edition, with a series of not very judiciously selected portraits. It is of course in no sense a critical or an authoritative treatment of the subject, nor is it likely to be taken for such. A careful examination would doubtless reveal an appalling number of inaccuracies, and the most casual reader will come upon judgments so inept as to call forth a smile. But, if we do not take the book too seriously, it will be found readable, and even helpful as a means of passing under rapid survey the various groups of Victorian writers.

Professor Henry Craik's "Life of Jonathan Swift" was published nearly twelve years ago in a single large volume, and became at once the standard authority upon its subject. It now reappears in much more convenient shape, forming two volumes of the charming "Eversley" edition (Macmillan), and adorned with two portraits. The text is practically the same as before, the author having seen no reason to alter his opinions on the life of Swift, or his conception of the character and work of the great satirist.

Bound up with the twelfth "General Catalogue of Columbia College" (New York) there is a facsimile reproduction of the first. It was a single broadside sheet of modest dimensions, printed in 1774, and giving the names of all graduates for the sixteen years that the institution had then been in existence. The catalogue now published is a volume of 620 pages, and is devoted solely to giving the names, dates, and addresses (for those still living) of all the persons that have ever been connected with Columbia College, either as officers or students. "Great oaks from little acorns grow" is a homely proverb that does not often have a better illustration than this stout volume. The compilation has been made by Professor J. H. Van Amringe and Mr. John B. Pine. Its most distinctive feature as contrasted with earlier issues is a "Locality Index," which groups the living graduates by states and cities, and ought to promote the establishment of many new alumni organizations.

Two new parts of the "New English Dictionary" (Macmillan) begin, respectively, the letters D and F. (E has already been published entire.) D, which with E, will form the third volume of the great work, is edited by Dr. Murray; while F, beginning volume four, has been undertaken by Mr. Henry Bradley, who was responsible for E also. F, G, and H will be brought within the fourth volume. The two letters now started will be continued in quarterly sections, without interruption. The parts now issued run from D to Decet, and from F to Fang, respectively.

## NEW YORK TOPICS.

*New York, January 26, 1895.*

The continuation of the American Copyright League as a permanent organization for the maintenance and improvement of the law enacted in 1891 has been abundantly justified by recent events. It was thought by some members that with the passage of the bill establishing international copyright the League's usefulness was at an end. The League has remained quiescent for four years, and has discouraged many well-meant movements to improve the law, in order that the latter might be thoroughly tested and that the principle of international copyright might be firmly established in the minds of the people. The so-called Hicks bill, by which it was proposed to remove copyright protection from engravings and etchings unless made in this country, required immediate attention, however; and the power of the League and its affiliated societies has been shown by the promptness with which the bill has been defeated by the active efforts of the League, under the able leadership of Mr. Robert Underwood Johnson, its secretary. By the same token, the new Covert bill, to prevent excessive damages in cases where newspapers have infringed the copyright law, has very properly received the support of the League, and will no doubt be passed. Instead of a separate fine for each issue of a journal containing the pirated matter, the penalty is limited to double the market value of the copyright infringed upon.

In deference to the wishes of the League, the American Authors' Guild has postponed the recommendation of certain changes in the copyright law until a more propitious season. The Guild will perform a real service to all who earn their living by writing, if it is successful in its efforts to have authors' manuscripts rated as printed matter by the postmaster-general. Mr. Bissell has practically promised that this shall be done.

The first of the "Atlantic Monthly" series of articles on "New Figures in Literature and Art" is from the pen of Mr. Royal Cortissoz, art-critic of the New York "Tribune," and has for its subject the work of Daniel Chester French. Mr. Cortissoz has also prepared for the March "Harper's" a paper which is a plea for "An American Academy at Rome," in which he will question the final authority of France in art, and will advocate the training of painters of all schools amid Italian traditions. Mr. Cortissoz is without question the most promising of our younger writers on art, having devoted himself almost exclusively to its study. His latest paper is probably the outcome of a pilgrimage made last summer through the principal art-centres of Europe, one of several that he has made. His criticisms of the decorations and art exhibits of the Columbian Exposition are remembered here as among the most thorough and incisive which appeared.

The preface of Professor Moses Coit Tyler's "Three Men of Letters" would seem to indicate that with the completion of his "Literary History of the American Revolution," soon to be sent to the press, his labors as an historian of American literature will be at an end. The present volume contains monographs upon Bishop Berkeley, Timothy Dwight, and Joel Barlow. The first of these, the author says, "was an incidental product of the researches I made some years ago when working upon my 'History of American Literature During the Colonial Time,' but could not properly be included in that work." "The last two monographs

were prepared for 'The Literary History of the American Revolution,'" Professor Tyler continues, "but as the chief activity of the two writers thus dealt with belongs to the period immediately after the Revolution, I have deemed it best to exclude them from that work." It is thus clear that the literature of the Republic will not be taken up by this author. His histories of Colonial and Revolutionary literature are not likely to be superseded, and, with Professor Richardson's "History of American Literature," form a complete and satisfactory survey of our literary past. Mr. George Haven Putnam, whose firm publishes all of these works, and who has himself turned author, has been lecturing the past week at Bowdoin College on the history of publishing during the Middle Ages. Among the announcements of Messrs. G. P. Putnam's Sons for the present year are new editions of "Mr. Midshipman Easy," by Marryat, illustrated by representative American artists; "At Odds," by Baroness Tautphœus; and "Richelieu" and "Agincourt," by G. P. R. James, in their "Famous Novel Series."

Mr. Rossiter Johnson, the veteran editor and author, is busily engaged upon the current volume of Appletons' "Annual Cyclopaedia," which has been rightly called "a history of the world for one year." A more than usually large number of distinguished people passed away in 1894, and special effort has been made to secure capable biographers. The biography of Robert Louis Stevenson will be written by Mr. Edward L. Burlingame, editor of "Scribner's Magazine," a close personal friend of the dead romancer. Mr. Johnson has also been occupied for some time in seeing through the press his "Camp-fire and Battle-field, an Illustrated History of the Great Civil War," which will be published next week by Messrs. Bryan, Taylor & Co., of this city. The work will contain special contributions by eminent participants on both sides, with more than a thousand illustrations, many of them from photographs belonging to the War Department, now engraved for the first time. The advance sale of this work, by subscription, has been unexpectedly large.

The fourth volume of Professor John Bach McMaster's "History of the People of the United States" will soon be issued by the Messrs. Appleton. It takes up the story of the second war for independence, and the succeeding period. The volume has much to do with the economic history of our country at that time, and deals with the business depression and hard times which were the causes of the enormous exodus of seaboard residents to the Valley of the Mississippi. An interesting chapter is devoted to early American magazines and periodicals.

Still another author has passed through the English Bankruptcy Court under discreditable circumstances, and, judging by recent experiences, it would not be surprising were he to come here and deliver literary lectures, which seems to be the last resort in such cases. The advent of a French writer of salacious stories was loudly heralded not long since; but a stinging editorial by Mr. Arthur Brisbane, in one of our daily newspapers, calling upon all good people to shun him and his lectures, has had the effect of keeping him away, for it is now announced that "M. —" is not coming, and never intended to come, to New York."

Of quite another sort is the witty, whole-souled Frenchman, "Max O'Rell," now lecturing through the West. I have just heard that "Mark Twain's" article on "What Paul Bourget Thinks of Us," in the January

"North American Review," will be answered by "Max O'Rell" in the March number. So I suppose there will be great fun, and the fur will fly. The Messrs. Harper have made a mystery of the new historical romance, "Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc," which will begin in the April number of their magazine. Judging by the title alone, the story should be by "Mark Twain," and I give the guess for what it is worth. *Apropos* of "Max O'Rell," the Cassell Publishing Co. has purchased the American rights of his last book, "John Bull & Co.," and the firm now publishes all of this author's works in this country. I understand that the American Publishing Company, of Hartford, will hereafter publish all of "Mark Twain's" works, and that these books will be sold by subscription hereafter, as was formerly the case.

A good deal of curiosity has been excited by a pointed reference in one of Whittier's letters, given in the recently published "Life and Letters," to "the best and ablest literary paper in the country." The apprehensive or incredulous editor of the Letters, Mr. Pickard, appears to have felt called upon to suppress the name of the journal thus strongly characterized by Mr. Whittier, although his opinion on such a subject could hardly fail to be a matter of legitimate literary interest. However, chance has thrown the original letter in my way, and the missing words may now be supplied: "THE DIAL." But I give the letter entire, having carefully copied it from Mr. Whittier's familiar handwriting:

Hampton Falls, N. H., Aug. 19, '92.

*My dear Friend:* I don't believe that half of the nice things the papers are saying of thy little book reach thee. Here is a clipping from the Chicago "Dial," the best and ablest literary paper in the country. With loving remembrance, from thy friend,

JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Thus it is seen that "the truth will out," in spite of hyper-cautious editors like Mr. Pickard.

ARTHUR STEDMAN.

#### LITERARY NOTES.

The Rev. H. Shaen Solly is writing a life of his late father-in-law, Professor Henry Morley.

Moritz Carriere, author of "Die Kunst," and other works of philosophy and aesthetics, died at Munich a few days ago.

Professor Augustus Chapman Merriam of Columbia College died at Athens on the 19th of January, at the age of fifty-one. He had been a member of the Columbia faculty for more than a quarter of a century, and was, at the time of his death, away on leave of absence for a year.

The New York "Critic" for January 10 is made peculiarly interesting by its account of the Stevenson memorial meeting, as well as by other matter relating to the dead novelist. It also contains a noteworthy article upon the second Congress of American Philologists, held at Philadelphia during the holidays.

With the appearance of the sixth and final volume of Dr. Skeat's Library Edition of Chaucer, the publishers, Messrs. Macmillan & Co., announce that a Supplementary Volume is in course of preparation by Professor Skeat, to be issued during the present year, containing the "Testament of Love" (in prose), and the chief poems which have at various times been attributed to

Chaucer and published with his genuine works in old editions. The volume will be complete in itself, with an introduction, notes, and glossary; and will be uniform with the Library Edition of Chaucer's Complete Works.

Mr. David Christie Murray's talk at the Twentieth Century Club, on the evening of January 18, was received with much interest by the members of the Club. Taking for his subject "The Poet's Note-Book," Mr. Murray discoursed for about an hour and a half upon the essentials of poetic diction, with such tribute of enthusiasm to Burns and other Scotsmen as their fellow-countrymen may always be counted upon to pay.

The most serious literary loss of the month came on the eleventh, with the death of Dr. Thomas Gordon Hake, in his eighty-sixth year. He was one of the men of 1809, was educated at Christ's Hospital, studied medicine, travelled a good deal on the Continent, and finally settled down to practice in East Anglia. He was the intimate friend of Borrow and Rossetti, and published several volumes of poems — "Valdarno," "Madeline," "New Symbols," "Parables and Plays," "Legends of To-morrow," "Maiden Ecstasy," and "The New Day." His "Memoirs of Eighty Years" appeared in 1892, and a Civil List pension was granted him in 1893.

Professor William Rufus Perkins, who died at Erie, Pa., on the 27th of January, was a man of rare character and abilities, whose higher qualities were perhaps too little appreciated by the most of those who knew him. For some years before his death, he held the chair of History at the State University of Iowa, having gone there from Cornell University, where he was an assistant professor. He was the author of some valuable historical papers, including an almost unique monograph on the Iowa Trappists, based upon an exhaustive study of that singular and interesting community. He was also a reviewer of historical works for THE DIAL and other journals. But Professor Perkins's best work was as a poet. A shy and reticent man, it was known to but few of his friends that poetry was to him much more than the diversion of an idle hour — that to it he gave his best powers and sought to express in it his real self. His poem of "Eleusis" has already been characterized in THE DIAL as one of the most remarkable and meritorious of the longer poems that have appeared in America in many years. The volume containing it ("Eleusis, and Lesser Poems") was issued in 1892; it is not known that he is the author of any other books of verse. Professor Perkins was about forty-five years of age, and unmarried.

Messrs. Ward, Lock, & Bowden, New York, are the agents in this country for "The Windsor Magazine," a new English monthly of the popular sort. It is more like "The Strand Magazine" than any other of its competitors, and sells at twenty cents a copy. — We note with gratification the re-appearance of "The Southern Magazine," whose untimely demise was chronicled a few weeks ago. It begins again with the January issue, under a new management. — Of great importance also is the resumption of that very valuable weekly, "Science," under the auspices of an editorial committee comprising the most distinguished specialists in the country. The paper has gone back to the typographical features of the earlier volumes, and once more presents an exceedingly attractive appearance. — A most creditable addition to the scientific periodicals issued by the University of Chicago is "The Astrophysical Journal," which succeeds the old



"Astronomy and Astro-Physics," and which is now edited by Professors George E. Hale and James E. Keeler, with the collaboration of a large number of American and European physicists and astronomers.—From Los Angeles, Cal., comes "The Land of Sunshine," an illustrated monthly whose bright and winning appearance does not belie its name. Its literary quality too is good. Under the editorial guidance of Mr. Charles F. Lummis, an experienced and favorably known literary worker, with the assistance of Mr. Charles D. Willard and other ready contributors, the periodical should not make its appeal in vain either to Californians or to more Eastern readers.—The first number of the American edition of "The Bookman," already noted in these columns, is expected to appear in February.—We may close this note upon the new periodicals of the year by mention of "The Metaphysical Magazine," a monthly devoted to Occultism.

#### TOPICS IN LEADING PERIODICALS.

February, 1895 (First List).

Bad Taste, The Pleasures of. Annie S. Winston. Lippincott.  
California, The Mountains of. Alice Morse Earle. Dial.  
Civil Service Reform at Present. Theo. Roosevelt. Atlantic.  
College Preparation, Uniform Standards in. Educational Rev.  
Colorado's Experiment with Populism. J. F. Vaile. Forum.  
Corpus Christi in Seville. Caroline E. White. Lippincott.  
Dialect, The Use and Abuse of. Dial.  
Diamond-Back Terrapin, The. D. B. Fitzgerald. Lippincott.  
Drama, Technique of the. J. S. Nollen. Dial.  
East, Alfred, R. I. Walter Armstrong. Magazine of Art.  
Electric Action, Modern Theories of. H. S. Carhart. Dial.  
Emin Pasha, The Death of. R. Dorsey Mohun. Century.  
Farmer, The Fate of the. F. P. Powers. Lippincott.  
Forestry Question, The. E. A. Bowers and others. Century.  
French Fighters in Africa. Poultney Bigelow. Harper.  
Froude, James Anthony. Augustine Birrell. Scribner.  
Froude's Erasmus. C. A. L. Richards. Dial.  
Gambling. John Bigelow. Harper.  
German Socialism, Program of. Wilhelm Liebknecht. Forum.  
Giants and Giantism. Charles L. Dana. Scribner.  
Glasgow, Art in. Elizabeth Robins Pennell. Harper.  
Goff's Etchings. Frederick Wedmore. Magazine of Art.  
Gold, Why Exported? Alfred S. Heidelbach. Forum.  
Government Banking. Wm. C. Cornwell. Forum.  
Holmes, Oliver Wendell. Mrs. James T. Fields. Century.  
Kindergartens and the Elementary School. Educat'l Rev.  
Lincoln as Commander-in-Chief. A. K. McClure. McClure.  
Lincoln, Chase, and Grant. Noah Brooks. Century.  
Lingo in Literature. William C. Elam. Lippincott.  
Mob, A Study of the. Boris Sidis. Atlantic.  
Music in America. Antonín Dvořák. Harper.  
Napoleon, The Wax Cast of the Face of. McClure.  
Negro in Fiction, The Future of the. Dial.  
Nervous System, Education of the. H. H. Donaldson. Ed. Rev.  
New York Colonial Privateers. T. A. Janvier. Harper.  
New York, People in. Mrs. Schuyler Van Rensselaer. Century.  
Perugia. Mrs. Frank W. W. Topham. Magazine of Art.  
Philosophic Renaissance in America. John Dewey. Dial.  
Physical Training in Public Schools. M. V. O'Shea. Atlantic.  
Poetry, Recent American. William Morton Payne. Dial.  
Railroads, Government Control of. C. D. Wright. Forum.  
Russia as a Civilizing Force in Asia. Atlantic.  
Secondary Education, Values in. W. B. Jacobs. Educat'l Rev.  
Social Discontent. Henry Holt. Forum.  
Speech-Reading. Mrs. Alexander G. Bell. Atlantic.  
Stevenson in the South Sea. Wm. Churchill. McClure.  
Stevenson, Robert Louis. S. R. Crockett. McClure.  
Thaxter, Celia. Annie Fields. Atlantic.  
Vedder, Elihu, Recent Work of. W. C. Brownell. Scribner.  
Weapons, New, of the U. S. Army. V. L. Mason. Century.  
Whigs, Passing of the. Noah Brooks. Scribner.

#### LIST OF NEW BOOKS.

[The following list, containing 81 titles, includes books received by THE DIAL since its last issue.]

##### HISTORY.

History of the City of Rome in the Middle Ages. By Ferdinand Gregorovius; trans. from the 4th German edition, by Annie Hamilton. In 2 vols., 12mo, uncut. Macmillan & Co. \$3.75.  
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